CHILE'S DEMOCRATIC ROAD TO SOCIALISM:

THE RISE AND FALL OF SALVADOR ALLENDE, 1970-1973.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis studies the Chilean experience of a democratic road to socialism, initiated with the election of Salvador Allende as president in 1970 and ending with his overthrow by the Chilean armed forces in 1973. The interplay of political, economic and cultural variables is considered and an effort is made to assess their relative significance concerning the failure of la via chilena.

Allende's Popular Unity government was within the traditions of Chilean history since 1930: leftist electoral participation and popular support, respect for the democratic system, state direction in the economy, ideological competition and the political attempt to resolve continuing socio-economic problems. Chile was politically sophisticated but economically underdeveloped. In a broader sense, the Left sought complete independence for Chile and a genuine national identity. U.S. involvement is therefore examined as a continuing theme in perceptions of Chilean history.

The seeds of Popular Unity's downfall were as much inherent in the contradiction between an absolute ideology and a relative political strength as in the opposition of those with a vested interest in the existing system. Indeed, the Left itself was a part of that system.

Popular Unity went a considerable way in implementing its policies, but the question of power was not resolved as the political forces became stalemated. The revolutionary

Left proposed breaking with the democratic process, but did not have the means to do so. The armed forces, fearing possible action by the revolutionary Left, receiving wide popular support and implicit or explicit congressional sanction, and in danger of internal disunity as a result of the political conflict, finally supplied its own solution to the political deadlock. The fundamental change in direction of recent Chilean politics occurred not in 1970 but in September 1973 with the military coup d'état in which Allende was overthrown.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

All history is conceptually laden: since all historians including empiricists have to establish their historical field, theoretical assumptions are inevitable, producing what Pieter Geyl characterized as an "argument without end". The abundant literature that has emerged on Salvador Allende's Chile is especially notable for the wide divergence of interpretation, reflecting amongst other things the intense and diverse ideological debate that has existed in recent Chilean politics and society. The reviewers of one selection of books, by both Chileans and others, titled their review "Visions of Chile" to emphasize the plurality of ideological perspectives. They demonstrated that interpretations were dependent upon the questions asked, which were ideologically inspired. "Each set of questions leads to different answers within the same web of reality."[1]

The political polarization that occurred in Chile in the 1960's and the early 1970's has meant that the radical visions, those of the revolutionary Left and the Right, have received the most attention. However these visions appear to this author the least satisfactory in the degree to which the ideological perspective distorts the reality of the Chilean experience, thus encouraging simplistic answers rather than genuine insight.

First, the initial assumptions of these visions tend to be self-fulfilling, so that not only are the answers inherent in the

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1. A. and J.S. Valenzuela, 'Visions of Chile' in Latin American Research Review, Fall 1975, 157.

questions but the possibility of other answers is constricted. The revolutionary Left views as inevitable a violent confrontation between the forces of revolution and reaction, or in Marxist terms between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Therefore the central premise of the Allende strategy, building socialism through the existing democratic system rather than destroying that system first, was doomed to failure, as confirmed by the overthrow of Allende. "The Chilean tragedy confirms... that there is no such thing as a peaceful road to socialism."[2] (my emphasis)

The Right begins with the premise that Marxism was a movement and ideology alien to Chile. Thus the very existence of Popular Unity was an aberration: its election victory in 1970 discredited the democratic system rather than legitimized the Marxist government. This premise is so selective as to be an unreal view of Chilean history.

Second, the ideological preoccupation tends to produce an over-simplification of language, as history becomes an allegory of the good and bad. In the scheme of the revolutionary Left those who are not for the revolution are against it. Thus, "Those who are irrevocably committed to nonviolence would do well to admit that they are not revolutionaries and to confine their activities to seeking reforms which are safely within the framework of the capitalist system."[3] The discrediting term "bourgeois" is used to describe all forces of the status quo, ignoring the large and heterogeneous nature of the Chilean middle class or the initial sympathy that some sectors of the middle class felt with Popular

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2. P.M. Sweezy and H. Magdoff (ed.), Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Chile, New York 1974, 11.

3. Ibid.

Unity, as expressed in the radical electoral campaign of the Christian Democrat candidate. Nor were the proletariat solidly behind Allende. As one reviewer complained, "Bourgeoisie and proleteriat run amok on the stage of history like dinosaurs in a chicken run".[4] In the Chilean context the language of class struggle often confuses as much as it clarifies, notwithstanding the appearance of class struggle in its classic form by 1972.

The Right views Marxism as inherently bad; thus the Left in Chile becomes equated with totalitarianism despite Allende's professed concern for a pluralist, democratic form of socialism. Only by viewing Marxism as an aberration can they speak of a return to normality after 1973. These semantic tricks do not disguise the irony of the overthrow of a democratically-elected government and a democratic system in the name of Democracy, or the human loss of thousands of Chileans dead and many more in exile. As a New Yorker cartoon exclaimed in 1971, "When a Communist can win a free election, I say there's something wrong with free elections!"[5]

Third, inherent in the ideological perspectives of these visions is the focus on external actors as primarily responsible for the Chilean tragedy. For the Left, since Chile is a dependent capitalist economy, the blame for the overthrow of the Allende government lies with the centre of the world capitalist economy, the United States. The Chilean Right and the armed forces are by definition the local allies or clients of the CIA and the

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4. D. Lehrmann, 'Review Article: Allende's Chile: the Judgement of History and the Verdict of Fringe-Marxism' in Journal of Development Studies, Jan. 1978, 251.

5. New Yorker, 24 April, 1971.

Pentagon.

For the Right Marxism, as something alien to Chile, emanates from Moscow and Havana. Thus the Chilean Communist party, with its faith in international communism, remains the real totalitarian threat to Chilean freedom, despite the fact that the Socialist party in word and action was more radical.

But this focus on external actors, while valuable for placing Chile in a wider context, has several failings. It tends to confuse the evidence of foreign involvement, of which there is enough to excite both sides, with the actual significance of that evidence. It allows for the side-stepping of self-examination, which gives these visions their air of self-justification. It also devalues the internal dynamic of Chilean politics, failing to establish whether this was in itself sufficient to have created the overthrow of Allende.

The simplistic conclusion of these visions, that democracy and socialism are incompatible, both played a major part in the disastrous dialectic that resulted in the military coup in 1973 and has serious implications for the future: for the revolutionary Left socialism cannot be attained by democratic means; for the Right democracy with socialism is not democracy.

Why Allende was overthrown is the central concern of this thesis. Since Allende's essential objective was a democratic transition to socialism, and since both democracy and socialism were overthrown by the armed forces in 1973, two questions arise. The first asks why Chilean democracy failed. The second asks why a socialist transformation failed; since this deals with probable rather than actual consequences of decisions and events, it is

necessarily more hypothetical than the first. Between these two questions is the crux of the issue; the interaction of democracy and socialism in Chile.

My initial premise is that the revolutionary process, unleashed in Chile in 1970 and terminated in 1973, was not inevitable, in form or outcome. I assume that the subjective has some importance in history, that men can change the course of history. Moreover, I am allowing that the "accidental" event, for example, a sudden drop in the world market price of copper, can affect outcome as much as the "determined" event, such as the response to the Allende government of those with a vested interest in the existing order.

My focus is on the domestic situation in Chile. Outside actions and events will be considered only for their impact on the internal dynamic. For example, the changes in American foreign policy towards Chile will be examined for their practical implications in regard to the overthrow of Allende, not for what they tell us of the American politic.

Within this internal dynamic, my primary concern is with the Chilean Left itself, its character and aspirations, choices and actions, in the belief that self-examination is as important as polemic if the Chilean tragedy is not to repeat itself.

At the centre of the Chilean tragedy was Salvador Allende, the medical doctor and politician whose dream of a democratic road to socialism ended in his own death. His story is written by the Spanish poet Juan Ramón Jimenez:

My feet, so deep in the earth!

My wings, so far into the heavens!

- And so much pain

in the heart torn between!

At the centre also was the poet Pablo Neruda, veteran of the Spanish Civil War and the struggle for justice in his own country, whose voice many Chileans heard. His funeral, a few days after the 1973 coup, became the occasion for the first popular protest against the military junta.

The Mexican poet Octavio Paz wrote on the event of the 1973 coup, "Whether or not reality is unpleasant, it is real... Latin America is a continent full of rhetoric and violence - two forms of pride, two ways of ignoring reality."[6] The tragedy in Chile breeds a commitment: a self-examination of the theoretical assumptions against reality, and not just within their own terms of reference. It is not enough to trust one's voice, one has to answer for it.

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6. O. Paz, 'The Centurions of Santiago' in Dissent, Spring 1974, 355-6.

CHAPTER I

THE 1970 ELECTION
Salvador Allende and la via chilena

In 1970 world attention focused on Chile, where for the first time a Marxist leader had come to office freely elected by the people. Supported by the Popular Unity coalition (UP) Allende had pledged a non-violent socialist transformation of Chile, a revolution by ballots, not bullets. This election was striking, but also consistent with Chile's strong democratic and legalist tradition, which contrasted with the norm of the so-called politics of illegitimacy existing in most other Latin American countries.

Since the early 1930's transitions of power had been peaceful and through legitimate institutions. The 1925 Constitution, which established the presidential executive as predominant, was adhered to, unlike the practice in other Latin American countries. The Chilean Congress remained the strongest and most durable in Latin America. The parliamentary system was open, multi-party, and intensely competitive, permitting a variety of political alternatives. Human rights were largely respected, and there was a low level of military intervention in politics.[1]

While the political system was accepted by all political forces, with the occasional exception of the extreme Left and Right,

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1. see F.G. Gil, The Political System of Chile, Boston 1966; P.E. Sigmund, The Overthrow of Allende, Pittsburgh 1977, 14-18.

the Chilean electorate constantly experimented with new political forces, alternating between parliamentarian and authoritarian and a variety of ideological solutions. In the post-war period, not one of the political forces which had reached office had been re-elected for a second term, suggesting a perennially dissatisfied electorate.

From 1946 to 1952 a party coalition was led by a middle-class, anti-clerical group, the Radical party, which had emerged from the Popular Front (1938-41) as the centre of gravity in Chilean party politics. However, the factors responsible for the Radicals' central role at the same time made it difficult for them to govern effectively. They were characterized by a fluidity and ambiguity of programme, which enabled them to hold together a wide, diverse following, but which also earned them a reputation for political expediency and opportunism.[2]

In 1952 Carlos Ibáñez, the dictatorial president of 1927-31, was re-elected as a strong man who would transcend party politics and politicians. "Ibáñismo" was more a mood of strong disillusionment than a movement, a reaction against the inefficiency of the parliamentary system by a heterogeneous group of social forces cutting across party lines. Ibáñez's appeal of paternal authoritarianism was comparable to that of Peron in Argentina. Significantly, for the first time the majority of rural workers and tenant farmers defied the conservative landowners to vote for Ibáñez, reflecting not only a breakdown in the political implications of rural

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2. on the Radical party, see J. -P. Bernard, et al., Guide to the Political Parties of South America, Middlesex 1973, 256-9; B.G. Burnett, Political Groups in Chile, Austin 1970, 182; Gil, 75.

paternalism, but also the failure of the preceding coalitions of the Centre and the Left to produce reform in rural Chile.[3]

However, in his second term Ibáñez proved weak and ineffectual, failing to deliver on his demagogic promises. To combat inflation of 71 per cent in 1954 and 84 per cent in 1955, he brought in the U.S. Klein-Saks agency, which introduced harsh stabilization measures and became the subject of hatred by the lower classes. This marked the end of Ibáñez's populism and the beginning of a bitter and repressive confrontation with the working class. By the end of his term, his political support had evaporated.

Following the failure of caudillo-type government, the Chilean electorate returned to orthodox party politics, electing in 1958 a leading Chilean industrialist, Jorge Alessandri. His was a right-wing "government of managers", supported by the Conservative and Liberal parties. Alessandri's formula was orthodox economic liberalism relying on import restrictions, wage ceilings and currency controls to combat inflation. Foreign capital was sought in the form of investment and aid, which required creating an attractive domestic climate. Between 1958 and 1964, Chile's foreign debt rose from $569 million to $1896 million, most of the new capital coming from the United States.[4]

But once again inflation undermined the government's credibility, after its stabilization programme collapsed with a

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3. on Ibáñez, see Gil, 77-9; K. Medhurst (ed.), Allende's Chile, London 1972, 16-19; I. Roxborough, et al., Chile: The State & Revolution, U.S.A. 1977, 35-6.

4. Roxborough, et al., 38; Sigmund, 25-9.

balance-of-payments crisis in 1962. Moreover, the Cuban Revolution and the Alliance for Progress had changed the tide of opinion underneath Alessandri: competent management and maintenance of the status quo were no longer acceptable.

In 1964 Latin America's first Christian Democrat government was elected in Chile, the Christian Democrats replacing the Radicals as the fulcrum of the multi-party system. Eduardo Frei's absolute majority was also the first in a Chilean post-war election. Frei pledged a "Revolution in Liberty", and went some way toward fulfilling his ambitious reform programme. But in the last years of his administration the usual problems re-emerged: high inflation, internal dissension, an increasingly intransigent Congress and falling electoral support.[5]

Thus, the Chilean electoral tradition was characterized by a cyclic rather than linear pattern, with certain themes re-emerging continuously. Rather than any decisive break in that tradition, the Allende victory stressed its continuities.

The election of Allende was neither a pre-determined nor a random event. Given the long tradition of leftist participation in electoral politics, the strong commitment to democratic legalism, the emergence in 1958 of a well-defined and evenly-divided Right-Centre-Left schema, and a rapidly expanding electorate, the possibility of a leftist victory was inherent in the Chilean political system and culture. In 1958, Allende's margin of defeat by Alessandri was found in the forty thousand votes received by a leftist priest, Zamorano, standing as an independent. In 1964, events

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5. on the 1964-70 Christian Democrat government, see Sigmund, 23-91.

conspired against Allende when he faced an alliance of the Centre and the Right. His 39 per cent of the vote would have brought him a clear victory in 1958. In 1970 events favoured Allende: with a smaller percentage of the vote than he received in 1964, he gained a narrow plurality over the candidate of the Right. Thus, it was a set of historical circumstances that tilted the balance in favour of a leftist victory.

The implications were far-reaching. First, control of the government by the Left was reversible; that is, if they were voted in by one set of alternatives, they could be voted out by another. Second, the evaluation of political performance in pragmatic terms meant that Allende had to deliver material improvement more effectively than his predecessor. Third, it indicated the continued predominance of political elites, notably the parties, which meant that the interpretation of public opinion by these elites was more important than that opinion itself. Sigmund concludes that the 1970 result "was directly related to shifts within and among the parties in 1969, which had a much greater influence on the outcome than did shifts in public opinion as a result of the actual campaign in 1970."[6]

The mobilization of the Chilean masses was also an integral part of the competition between political elites. The Christian Democrats on the one hand and the Marxist parties on the other vied to demonstrate that they could take the process of mobilization furtherest.[7] One reflection of this was the endless "numbers game",

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6. Sigmund, 77.

7. see H.A. Landsberger and T. McDaniel, 'Hypermobilization in Chile, 1970-1973' in World Politics, July 1976, 502-41.

whereby partisan Chilean newspapers argued over the size of political rallies.

However, one must avoid simplistic conclusions that the political elites could control outcome. A common explanation for Allende's victory among the Centre and Right was to blame the tactics and leftist stance of the Christian Democrat candidate, Radomiro Tomic. But leaving aside the question of Tomic's own political commitment, this makes the dubious assumption that a different set of tactics would have produced victory. Nor did Tomic's third placing mean that Frei had "failed", as the Left concluded. This explanation raises the questions of whether effective reforms could be equated with electoral success, or indeed whether "success" was possible within the political system.[8]

Although the parties promoted the mobilization of workers, peasants and "marginals", the effects of mobilization could take unexpected forms. In particular, popular mobilization created alienation from the political system in other sectors. This anti-parliamentarian and potentially anti-democratic movement resulted in a return of political support to the Right, reflected in the appeal of Alessandri's campaign. The slim plurality of Allende's victory, and the fact that it was the Right candidate who was close behind, suggested that Chile in 1970 was ripe not so much for revolution as for civil war.

The interpretation of Allende's election as the culmination of processes of mobilization and movement to the left of the Chilean

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8. see M.J. Francis, The Allende Victory, Tuscon 1973, 76; Sigmund, 108-9, 123-7.

people has come under critical examination. Prothro and Chaparro found that the marked shift of Chilean government to the left between 1952 and 1972 occurred without a corresponding increase in the ideological content or leftist orientation of public opinion.[9] One must distinguish between the electoral endorsement of a Marxist government and an ideological endorsement of Marxism by the Chilean people. The Chilean electorate experimented constantly and its relatively high level of politicization was stratified rather than unified. The movement to the left occurred at the system level, the result of individual alternatives afforded by the political system.

Thus, the predominant trend in the Chilean electorate in the late 1960's was not of radicalization, as one might have expected from a leftist victory, but of polarization. On the political plane, polarization was reflected in, and encouraged by, several trends: the disintegration of consensus within the Centre parties, the re-emergence of the Right, and the achieving of unity among the Left. These ensured that the combination of forces behind the absolute victory of Eduardo Frei in 1964 would not be repeated.[10] Instead the result was a three-way contest between candidates representing the Right, Centre and Left.

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9. see J.W. Prothro and P.E. Chaparro, 'Public Opinion and the Movement of Chilean Government to the Left' in A. and J.S. Valenzuela (eds.), Chile: Politics and Society, New Brunswick 1976, 67-114.

10. In 1964 Frei received 56 per cent of the vote, supported by a Centre-Right alliance.

The experience of office caused existing conflict within the Christian Democrat party to surface in 1967 when Frei temporarily lost control of the party.[11] On one side were the *officialistas*, including Frei himself and many of the older members of the PDC, who reaffirmed the evolutionary principle, giving priority to economic development. On the other side were the more idealistic *rebeldes*, including much of the party youth, who chose a revolutionary line emphasizing redistribution and social justice. The former saw "communitarianism" as the future ideal, the latter as the immediate objective.

Between these two groups emerged a third, the *terceristas*, who inclined towards the *rebelde* arguments, but who were respectful towards the *officialistas*. Their prime objectives were to accelerate reform, but also to recapture the political and ideological unity of the PDC before it had come to office. They believed that the party's openness to the Right in 1964 was responsible for the emerging disunity. A leading *tercerista*, Senator Renán Fuentealba, expressed the feelings of this group at the PDC convention in mid-1969:

> ... in 1964 the reactionary right had no alternative but to vote for the Christian Democrat Party, which was the only force able to confront the Socialist-Communist coalition. The fear of Allende made them vote for the Christian Democrats. And in 1964 Christian Democracy was a youthful, original and uncorrupted party.[12]

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11. on the conflict within the PDC, see F.G. Gil, 'Ideology and Pragmatism: The Crisis in Chilean Christian Democracy' in J.D. Martz (ed.), *The Dynamics of Change in Latin American Politics*, New Jersey 1971, 199-207; A. von Lazar and L. Quiros Varela, 'Chilean Christian Democracy: Lessons in the Politics of Reform Management' in *Inter-American Economic Affairs*, Spring 1968, 51-72; Sigmund, 50-76.

12. quoted by L. Gouré and J. Suchlicki, 'The Allende Regime: Actions and Reactions' in *Problems of Communism*, May-June 1971, 51.

Pressure from the Marxist parties and the left-wing within the PDC caused the Frei government to exhibit a greater leftist orientation in its last two years, especially on the dependency issue. In the copper industry, Frei demanded that Anaconda join the government's "Chileanization" programme, amid strong criticism from the Left that "Chileanization" had benefitted the copper companies more than Chile.[13] The high price of copper in the late 1960's certainly made it more imperative that the government increase its control over the whole copper industry.

On the hemispheric level, at a special meeting of CECLA in Vina del Mar in 1969, Foreign Minister Gabriel Valdez argued the growing economic disparity between the United States and Latin America and the need for increased Latin American integration to counteract this trend.[14] This indicated a response to the same awareness that was, on the left, giving inspiration and conviction to "dependency theory": the acknowledged failure of U.S. aid programmes, and the recognition that the Latin American situation, far from improving, was actually deteriorating. Parallel to this awareness was an edging towards trade ties with Cuba, demonstrating the Frei government's lack of faith in the American-sponsored trade embargo with Cuba through the OAS, which it had quietly accepted in 1964.

This apparent leftist trend in Christian Democrat opinion was reflected in the PDC's choice of candidate for the 1970 election,

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13. The copper companies were accruing high profits from the unanticipated high price of copper on the international market (62c a pound).

14. see Sigmund, 81-2.

since Frei could not constitutionally run for a succeeding term of office. Although Radomiro Tomic had long been considered Frei's logical successor, he differed from him both personally and ideologically. Both were charismatic, but whereas Frei appeared austere and politically aloof, Tomic came across as strongly partisan, with a reputation as a brilliant political orator for which his opponents characterized him "Mr Blah-Blah-Blah". Representing the concerns of the terceristas, Tomic stood ideologically to the left of the officialista Frei. Tomic's appointment as Chilean ambassador to the United States (1964-1968) meant that he was the only major Christian Democrat politician not affected by increasing public dissatisfaction with the Frei government.

But Tomic's ambassadorship tended to discredit him in the eyes of the Left, for whom any connection with the United States was like the kiss of death.[15] Tomic had made overtures to the Left, in particular the Communist party, in the hope of forming a Centre-Left coalition behind his candidacy. Fuentealba had also concluded, "To run in the presidential election of September 1970 without a coalition [with the moderate left] will lead us to death".[16] But the Communists knew that such an alliance would cancel out any hope of a united Left, since the Socialist party would be most unlikely to enter into a coalition with the Christian Democrats, and certainly would never accept a Christian Democrat candidate. Therefore the Communists rejected the discreet

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15. e.g. see P. Neruda, Memoirs, Middlesex 1978, 346.

16. quoted by Gouré and Suchlicki, 51.

advances of the PDC leaders, PC Secretary-General Luis Corvalán declaring, "Con Tomic ni a masa" (To mass with Tomic, never!).[17] This rejection ensured that Tomic would have to campaign for the Christian Democrats alone, since his leftist stance precluded an alignment with the Right, who had been alienated even by Frei's policies.

The processes of disintegration and leftist orientation were also operating within the Radical party. In the late 1960's the contradictory nature of the party, one current inclined towards Marxism and the other responding to traditional liberalism, finally began to be resolved in favour of the former.[18] At the party's convention in June 1967, the leftist sectors of the party emerged predominant, with the respected Alberto Baltra elected as chairman. The party's next convention in June 1969 confirmed this orientation. Baltra was selected as the Radical candidate for the 1970 presidential election, and the party's right-wing leaders, including its 1964 presidential candidate, Senator Julio Durán, were expelled. The party then began a dialogue with the Communist party, seeking to align itself with the Left. The expelled right-wing formed a new party, the Radical Democrats, which allied itself with the Right.

The Right's nomination of its own presidential candidate was independent of whether the Christian Democrat candidate was radical or moderate. The re-emergence of the Right was due partly to the absence of factors that had pushed it into a reformist

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17. quoted by H. Millas, Anatomia de un fracaso, Santiago 1973, 31.

18. F.G. Gil, The Political System of Chile, Boston 1966, 75, describes the contrary pulls within the Radical party.

position in 1964. The "freedom or communism" issue was no longer the centre of political debate, nor did the Cuban Revolution feature as the polarizing catalyst as it had in the early 1960's. Furthermore, there was no repeat of the Curicó by-election of March 1964 to frighten the Right.[19]

On the positive side, the Right had found a renewed self-confidence. In May 1966 the Conservative and Liberal parties finally buried their Catholic-secular dispute of a century before, and combined to form the National party. This organizational strengthening was accompanied by a rallying of forces, as Frei's reforms, especially his agrarian reforms, alienated rightist support of the government. The Right also exploited the desire for law and order in a period of economic and social unrest, with the activities of the MIR providing a convenient target. The upsurge in support for the Right was reflected in the 1969 congressional election, where the National party nearly doubled its vote to become the second-largest party after the Christian Democrats. The fall in the latter's vote from the 42.2 per cent of 1965 to 29.1 per cent in 1969 was primarily due to the defection of conservative votes.

But the trump card of a confident Right was its as yet undeclared candidate for the 1970 election, former president Jorge Alessandri. Although seventy-four, Alessandri was the one national figure of the Right: a popular and prestigious figure,

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19. In March 1964 a Marxist defeated the rightist candidate in a by-election in Curicó, considered to have been a conservative rural bastion. The result frightened the Conservative and Liberal parties into support for the Christian Democrat Frei in the presidential election, in order to obstruct Allende; see Sigmund, 29-30.

from a family famous in Chilean history.

At the time of the 1969 congressional elections, the Right fermented the idea that a high vote for the National party would encourage a reluctant Alessandri to stand. Following the election Alessandri duly declared his candidacy. Believing in their own propaganda, and also in reaction to their humiliation in 1964, the Right were confident that Alessandri would win the presidency.

The strong candidacy of Alessandri on behalf of the Right presented the parties of the Left with the need to achieve unity and back a single candidate. Yet the formulation of a common programme and of the rules governing the internal organization of the leftist coalition were achieved with surprising ease during October and November 1969, considering the bitter debates within the Left after the 1964 defeat. Despite their objection to broad alliances with middle-class groups, the Socialists accepted the inclusion of the Radicals in the coalition.

It was the process of choosing a single candidate that revealed the differences of ideology and interest among the various parties comprising Popular Unity (UP - Unidad Popular). It was partly an indication of the strong element of personalism in Chilean politics that ideological questions were interpreted into personalist terms. But it was also a reflection of the fundamental nature of the UP coalition and of the Chilean Left that it represented.

The idea of Popular Unity was to bring all the parties of the Left together, without sacrificing the essential character of any single party. The programme declared,

> The Unidad Popular government will be pluralistic: it will be composed of all revolutionary parties, movements and currents of opinion. In this way it will be a genuinely democratic, representative and coherent body.[20]

Pluralism was achieved by adopting simultaneously the strategies and concerns of all the coalition members. On one level, each party influenced the programme in the areas with which it was most concerned: the Communists on institutional matters, the Socialists in foreign affairs, MAPU in agrarian reform, the Radicals on nationalization and the mixed economy.[21] On another level, it was implied that the strategy of broad incremental changes desired by the Communists, and the strategy of class polarization and confrontation favoured by the Socialists, were to be simultaneous processes. Popular Unity was a combination of the concepts of a national liberation front and a workers' front, representing the previous leftist coalitions, the Popular Front and FRAP respectively.

Thus the democratic, pluralist nature of UP evolved from the realities imposed upon the Left: the strong democratic commitment of the Chilean political culture and the fragmented nature of the Left itself. Strategic differences were not resolved in favour of one group, nor were they synthesized, but rather added together. Practical coherence and direction would largely come from the person of the president. It was in this context that the choice of candidate became the issue on which the UP coalition almost floundered.

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20. 'The Programme of Unidad Popular' in S. Allende, Chile's Road to Socialism, (J.E. Garcés, ed.), Middlesex 1973, 33.

21. see Sigmund, 89, 302-3 n15.

Each of the six parties comprising Popular Unity nominated two candidates, then elimination and consensus would follow. The Communist party, the pivot of the coalition because it held together the Socialists and the middle-class groups, knew that a Communist would not be acceptable as a presidential candidate. Therefore it nominated the poet Pablo Neruda, an indication that it was prepared to support another candidate. Neruda later wrote that his candidacy was designed to force the other parties to come to an agreement.[22]

An impasse developed between the Communists, Socialists and MAPU, who supported the Socialist Salvador Allende, and the Radicals and the two miniscule parties API and the Social Democrats, who backed their nominees, Alberto Baltra and Rafael Tarud.[23] The implications were clear: would UP be led by the working class or the middle class, would it lean towards the proletarian coalition FRAP or the bourgeois-led Popular Front? In retrospect, the outcome seems inevitable: the middle class parties accepted Allende's nomination. Although the Radicals might attract crucial votes, it was the Communist and Socialist parties that would provide the bulk of UP support. Moreover, the Socialist party, the Communists and the Catholic worker-peasant movement MAPU would only accept a candidate linked to the working class. Ultimately the Left would consider as regression a return to the Popular Front phase. Allende later emphasized the development from the 1930's:

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22. Neruda, 336.

23. see Sigmund, 90-1.

> ... at the time of the Popular Front ... although it is true that there were the same Parties as today, the Radical party, the party of the bourgeoisie, was the dominant party, and this is what makes the difference between the Popular Unity today and the Popular Front: in the Popular Unity, no party enjoys a position of supremacy, but there is a supreme class, the working class, and there is a Marxist Socialist President.[24]

Although Allende was a Socialist, his nomination represented a victory for the Communist party, determining its dominant influence in Popular Unity. Other indications confirmed this. Strategically, the moderate electoral approach of the PC was most explicit, since a large number of Socialists, led by Carlos Altamirano, had little faith in the electoral process. The inclusion of the Radicals was sponsored by the Communists, and accepted by the Socialists only after Allende had received the PS nomination. In terms of organization, the PC would always be the backbone of any coalition of the Left. Of the six to eight thousand UP committees created to consolidate local electoral support and to be "germinal expressions of popular power",[25] a majority were controlled by the Communist party.

But this pervasive Communist influence left in the dark the question of how much faith the more radical Left had in the ultimate viability of a democratic road to socialism. Apart from the Socialists' theoretical belief in the inevitability of a violent confrontation, there was the practical difficulty that Allende had in securing the nomination of his own party. Two more radical leaders, Altamirano and Secretary-General Aniceto Rodríguez, first turned down the nomination, and even then the

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24. R. Debray, The Chilean Revolution, New York 1971, 67.

25. 'The Programme of Unidad Popular', 30.

final vote for Allende in the PS Central Committee was thirteen votes against twelve abstentions.[26] In Allende's favour were support by the PC, and the fact that after three previous presidential campaigns, especially the intense 1964 campaign, he was nationally known, important when competing against the name of Alessandri.

Salvador Allende was in part the voice, in part the epxression of the Left that backed his presidential candidacy. He personified many of its inherent tensions and contradictions: a man of bourgeois origin and a leader in a determinedly proletarian party; at the same time a committed democrat and committed socialist; opposed to violence yet a passionate revolutionary; a part of the political establishment for over three decades yet always seeking to transcend that establishment and to replace it with a new socialist order.

Unlike Fidel Castro, who seemed to burst onto the Cuban scene from nowhere, Allende had been immersed in the central arena of Chilean politics: elected deputy for Valparaiso, the port described by Neruda as a "filthy rose", in 1937, he served as a minister of public works under Pedro Aguirre Cerda in the Popular Front, and subsequently was a senator for twenty-five years.[27]

From his family he inherited a tradition of democratic militancy.

> All my uncles and my father were Radical party militants at a time when being a radical meant that one held advanced views. My grandfather founded the first lay

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26. Sigmund, 84.

27. see Allende's own account of his political background in Debray, The Chilean Revolution.

> school in Chile and his political views earned him the nick-name of 'Red Allende'.[28]

From his own experience and nature came a practical commitment to Marxist socialism. In his interview with the French Marxist, Régis Debray, Allende repeatedly emphasized that Marxist theory should be a guide but not a catechism, in which concern he represented the Socialist party which he helped to found. For himself, he maintained that he was an activist rather than a theorist, reflecting the political rather than ideological orientation of the traditional Left. "I am well aware that there is no revolutionary action without revolutionary theory, but I am essentially a man of action."[29] His unoriginal but effective speeches, and his career as a medical doctor, suggested a practical nature.

Allende's personal strength lay in unifying politically the different strands of the Chilean Left, particularly the uneasy alliance between the Communist and Socialist parties. His good relations with the Communists derived from two things. A courageous stand against Ibáñez in the 1952 presidential campaign, although of little impact at the time when he received only 5.4 per cent of the vote, served him well later when the reputation of most Chilean Socialists was tainted by their support for Ibáñez. Then his moderate position in the PS and quoting of Julius Caesar's advice to "hasten slowly" suggested more the evolutionary approach of the Communists than the revolutionary rhetoric of the Socialists.[30]

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28. Ibid., 66.
29. Ibid., 64.
30. Ibid., 96.

Sr. Eduardo Frei
(1964-70)

Dr. Salvador Allende
(1970-73)

General Augusto Pinochet
(1973-)

Sr. Pablo Neruda
(d. 1973)

Two assessments of him in the 1960's underline his political character. For Gil, Allende was "characterized chiefly by tact, extraordinary political intuition, ability and knowledge and a remarkable capacity for diplomacy and compromise."[31] More critically, Halperin wrote, "His greatest political asset was undoubtedly his remarkable skill in not arousing lasting enmity in anyone".[32]

Thus Allende contrasted with that other revolutionary leader, Fidel Castro, in another way and in a manner consistent with the pluralism of Popular Unity. Less charismatic than either Frei, Tomic or Alessandri, he encouraged this image.

> The process [the socialist transformation] in Chile is neither paternalistic nor charismatic. On the personal level... I am not a Messiah, nor am I a caudillo. We know that popular power is built from the base upwards.[33]

Pablo Neruda, a long-time associate, described him as "the anti-dictator, the democrat of principles, even in the smallest particulars...Allende was a collective leader".[34]

In 1964 the Frei campaign had focused its attack on Allende the "revolutionary": his frequent endorsement of the Cuban Revolution; his personal association with Fidel Castro and Ché Guevara, and the revolutionary language of his own party. In 1966 he sponsored the creation of the OLAS committed to the conception of continental armed struggle against North American

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31. Gil, The Political System of Chile, 290.

32. E. Halperin, Nationalism and Communism in Chile, Cambridge 1965, 212.

33. Debray, 94.

34. Neruda, 349.

imperialism, while in 1968 he was criticised for his personal support of five survivors of Guevara's failed Bolivan expedition who had reached Chile.

Yet the revolutionary image never fitted easily with the reality of a respected, senior parliamentarian in a land where revolutionary violence was little known. The explanation lay partly in his belief that unity was essential in the "effort to transcend ourselves"; unity included solidarity of "popular" movements despite their tactical differences, and the moral responsibility of leaders to the people.[35] His personal lesson from the Cuban Revolution was that

> a united people, a people which is conscious of its historical objective, is an invincible people... when it has responsible leadership, when it has men who are able to interpret the people's will, to feel that the people are the government, and this is the case with Fidel and Ché...[36]

Partly it was a romanticism which admired revolutionary movements such as those in Cuba and North Vietnam.

The 1970 election was a case of the ends against the middle, since both the Right and Left realised that their best chance lay in encouraging divisions within the Centre to undermine the development of a middle consensus. Therefore each sought to identify the Christian Democrat candidate with the other. An Alessandri poster showed photographs of Tomic and Allende, declaring, "They're the same...vote for another", while the Socialist party maintained, "El imperialismo juega dos cartas en esta eleccion: Alessandri y

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35. Allende, 62-4; Debray, 77.

36. Debray, 73.

Tomic" (Imperialism is playing two cards in this election: Alessandri and Tomic.)[37] The major use of television to present the candidates for the first time favoured Allende over the others. While Allende appeared urbane and surprisingly witty, doubts about the state of Alessandri's age and physical health were confirmed when the camera focused on his shaking hand, and Tomic's oratorical style was better suited to large rallies than to the narrow confines of the television studio and screen.[38]

Tomic believed that there was a clear and growing shift of the Christian Democrat party to the left, claiming in an interview after the election that more than 60 per cent of Chile's Christian Democrats were "people with leftist ideas, and possibly another 20 per cent would accept a leftist shift by the party and the country".[39] However it was probable that his electoral programme, emphasizing leftist policies, including immediate and complete nationalisation of the copper mines, was more radical than that favoured by the majority of the PDC. Moreover, through his commitment to accelerating reform, Tomic tended to distance himself from the Frei government, which meant that he benefitted less from Frei's great personal popularity and the positive achievements of the Christian Democrat government. This was reflected in his campaign slogan, "ni un paso atras" (not one step backwards) with its negative connotations.[40]

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37. Times of the Americas, 2 Sept., 1970, 3; Millas, 31.
38. on the role of television and radio in the campaign, see Sigmund, 102-3.
39. Times of the Americas, 2 Dec., 1970, 1.
40. Millas, 23.

Personalism, the projection of a personal image, was the basis of Alessandri's campaign. The propaganda both for and against him concentrated on the person: his supporters spoke of Don Jorge, while his opponents dubbed him "The Old Lady". Alessandri's appeal was similar to that of Ibáñez in the early 1950's, the return of a father figure who stood above party politics. His campaign theme was "Alessandri will return", and although he had the support of the National party he stood as an independent. Alessandri called for a general depoliticization of the country, in reaction against the mobilization of marginal groups by the Christian Democrats. He was critical of the political nature of trade unions, land reform and developmental processes, declaring, "There is too much politics and not enough work".[41] His own development perspective was one of orthodox economic liberalism, stressing private enterprise and economic efficiency and the subservience of reform to economic development. But Alessandri never had a formally elaborated programme; his campaign was based more on the communication of a mood than on ideas.[42] After the election, Allende viewed how the Right believed the myth which they themselves had created of Alessandri.

> For them, the image of Alessandri was the complete answer, it crossed all political boundaries, it was an ineffable light. Alessandri would win because he was Alessandri. There is something you must appreciate: in this country, history has shown that individuals, names, have an enormous influence.[43]

Allende's campaign was based on the Popular Unity programme, plus a list of forty basic measures, which, even if some resembled

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41. Time magazine, 7 Sept., 1970, 22.

42. Sigmund, 93.

43. Debray, 120-1.

the usual naive electoral promises, at least had an immediate appeal that Tomic's campaign lacked.[44]

On September 4, Chileans went to the poll in an election that almost certainly would be close; as one commentator observed, "To the end, the partisans of the three candidates were predicting the victory of their choice with the peculiar vehemence bred of uncertainty".[45] Dr. Salvador Allende had a slim lead, receiving 36.6 per cent of the vote to Alessandri's 35.2 per cent. Tomic trailed behind with 28.1 per cent. In terms of votes, Allende's margin of victory was 39,000 out of three million. His victory represented the consistent ability of the Left to attract one third of the electorate since 1958. Rather than significantly expanding its vote, the Left's success was due to the consolidation of its vote in the areas where it was already strong: especially the heavily unionized northern provinces and the city of Concepción in the south. As usual, a greater percentage of men voted for the Marxist candidate than women.[46]

Since no candidate received a simple majority, the Chilean Constitution decreed that in fifty days Congress should choose between the two leading candidates. Traditionally the front-running candidate had always been endorsed, but Congress had the constitutional prerogative to choose either candidate. The

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44. see D.L. Johnson (ed.), The Chilean Road to Socialism, Garden City 1973, 170, for the forty measures.

45. Economist, 5 Sept., 1970, 33.

46. see Sigmund, 106-9.

ambiguity of the September 4 result (for instance, who would be elected in a second round national vote between Allende and Alessandri?)[47] and the interval prior to the decision of Congress, produced a tense atmosphere which exposed the latent violence in Chilean society in the late 1960's. In those fifty days three trends evolved which favoured Allende's ratification by Congress.

The first was the temporary discrediting of the Right. Shocked at the defeat of Alessandri and at the prospect of a Marxist president, its leaders overplayed their hand in a panic of manoeuverings to obstruct Allende. On September 9 Alessandri, who before the election had declared himself in favour of the tradition that the frontrunner be chosen, announced publicly,

> In case of my election by the Congress, I would resign the post which would give rise to a new election. I can state categorically, of course, that I would not participate in that election under any circumstances.[48]

This was clearly an offer to the Christian Democrats: if they voted for Alessandri in Congress, he would open the way for new elections in which Frei would be eligible to run. The U.S. Senate Select Committee on covert action in Chile confirmed in 1975 that this "constitutional gambit" was supported by the United States; however, from the ITT documents released in 1972 it would appear that this strategy to block Allende was chosen by Alessandri himself,

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47. Because of the similarity between Tomic's and Allende's programmes, most commentators believed that the Christian Democrat votes would have gone to Allende. Sigmund, 109, argues that anti-Marxism in Chile would have favoured Alessandri.

48. quoted by Sigmund, 111.

in the face of demands from some American groups for more radical action.[49] Success depended upon the agreement of the vacillating Frei, but ultimately his commitment to constitutional democracy won over his antipathy towards Marxism.[50]

The Allende victory also prompted an immediate withdrawal of credit from Chilean banks. Between September 3 and October 20, $17 million was withdrawn from the Central Bank alone.[51] The flight of capital from the country and of many leading right-wing Chileans was so great that the Frei government was forced to restrict the amount of money that could be taken abroad. The near-economic collapse caused by the capital flight encouraged the belief that the self-interest of the Right came before their concern for the country.

Secondly, the Chilean armed forces reaffirmed their constitutional position. Early in May 1970, army commander General René Schneider stated the position of the armed forces if Congress chose the leftist candidate, "Our doctrine and mission is support and respect for the constitution... The Congress is sovereign in the case mentioned and our mission is to support its decision".[52] Following the election Schneider reaffirmed this principle, amid great pressure on the armed forces to act. The

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49. see United States Senate Select Committee, Covert Action in Chile, Washington 1975, 23-5; ITT, Subversion in Chile, Nottingham 1972, 29.

50. ITT, 29-32, 43, 51.

51. Gouré and Suchlicki, 54 n.

52. quoted by Sigmund, 99.

U.S. government also promoted a covert campaign encouraging the Chilean military to move against Allende, but no military intervention resulted.[53]

Thirdly, the Christian Democrats opted for a conciliatory approach toward Popular Unity. In part, PDC support of the Left was encouraged by the discrediting of the Right, which threatened their democratic ideals. In part, it was the inclination of the left-wing of the party, the former tercerista faction, to align with the Left, as seen in Tomic's early support for Allende. Furthermore, the lack of public knowledge of the vacillations of the PDC right-wing and Frei meant that their approach to the Left was not compromised. Primarily, the Christian Democrats supported the Left because the UP parties and Allende himself articulated clearly and publicly the threat of civil war if Allende was not chosen.[54]

If the PDC leaders did support the Left for defensive reasons, they were still concerned to go on record as the defenders of Chilean democracy. Their price for Christian Democrat support of Allende in Congress was a Statute of Democratic Guarantees, which included the independence from political interference of the armed forces, education, labour unions and the civil service, free and democratic elections, complete press freedom, and a pluralistic state open to all ideologies and respecting all political parties.[55]

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53. see U.S. Senate Select Committee, 25-6, on the American campaign toward the military, known as Track II.

54. see Allende himself, in Debray, 119-20; U.S. Ambassador Korry to the U.S. Congressional Committee on foreign affairs, United States and Chile during the Allende Years, Washington 1975, 30; Time magazine, 19 Oct., 1970, 19.

55. Debray, 119.

As further insurance the Statute was written into the Constitution, and shrewdly negotiated in public. Thus the PDC intended to bind Allende publicly and explicitly to democratic, constitutional means. They also demonstrated that the PDC had no intention of participating in a Popular Unity government, and that they were establishing the Constitution as the rule by which to judge UP. Allende accepted the Statute in what he later described as a "tactical necessity", a phrase subsequently used by the opposition to indicate a lack of sincerity.[56]

All three strands were drawn together in an incident two days before Congress met to choose the new president: the assassination of army commander-in-chief General Schneider. The apparent motivation behind his murder by right-wing terrorists was that his constitutional position was an obstacle to possible military intervention. The intention was only to kidnap the general, but he resisted the attack and was fatally wounded.

Ironically, Schneider's murder had the opposite result to that intended: the unanimous national repudiation of the murder, the first of a major public figure in Chile for many decades, sealed Allende's ratification as president. Alessandri had asked his supporters in Congress to vote for Allende two days before, after the failure of his own plan to block the Marxist, but the extremist action implicated the entire Right. Both the armed forces and the PDC reaffirmed their commitment to the constitutional process, and condemned extra-legal political activity. Schneider's death

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56. Ibid, 120. Allende maintained in this conversation that the guarantees were quite consistent with the UP programme.

indicated how close the country had been to political violence, both the actual violence of the extreme Right and the threat of violence of the Left. On October 24 Allende was elected by Congress by 153 votes against 35.

On the one hand, Allende's election attested the strength of legalism in the Chilean political culture, and increased the confidence of the Left that the legitimacy of Popular Unity would be defended by that legalist commitment. In other words, it encouraged belief in the viability of a democratic transition to socialism.

On the other hand, since the UP government remained a minority one, the conditional nature of his victory meant that the priority of Popular Unity was to gain an absolute majority in Congress. The control of the Chilean government by the Left was reversible, and the surprise of the Left at its own victory, as well as the covert activity to prevent Allende from taking office, produced a defensive mentality in the Left. It was thus encouraged to move quickly to produce "irreversible" changes. The veteran party leaders of the Left were well aware that Allende's election had not achieved complete power but only control of a part of the government. From this evolved the government's short-term strategy.

Meanwhile, perspectives on the electoral victory within the Left differed. The left-wing Socialist, Carlos Altamirano, emphasized that the Chilean victory was only a part of the continental Revolution and that its precedent was the Cuban Revolution.

> Our struggle has been not only for Cuba's liberty yesterday and for the building of socialism in Chile today, but...also for the continental revolution, the Latin American revolution, which must bring liberty, economic independence,

> and social peace and progress to the 20 Latin American nations.[57]

The new president was faced with the need to allay the doubts of potentially aggressive countries, including Argentina, Bolivia and the United States, that the Chilean victory would mean an upsurge of leftism in other Latin American countries. Therefore he stressed the native sources and the individuality of the revolutionary process in Chile.

> We very definitely maintain that each country has its own particular circumstances, and the tactics that its leaders must employ in order to achieve a popular victory must, as I have already said, be chosen accordingly. We do not expert Popular Unity, but if such a movement springs up in other Latin American countries or on other continents... it will be the responsibility of those peoples and those countries.[58]

More enigmatically he declared, "The Cuban Revolution had the flavour of sugar and rum. The Chilean Revolution will have the taste of meat pies and red wine".[59]

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57. quoted by L.E. Aguilar, 'Political Traditions and Perspectives' in Problems of Communism, May-June 1971, 67.

58. quoted by Aguilar, 67.

59. Time magazine, 19 Oct., 1970, 21.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILEAN LEFT

The vehicle and driving force behind Dr. Salvador Allende's presidential election in 1970 were the political parties of the Chilean Left: the Communist party (PC) and the Socialist party (PS).[1] Because both parties were explicitly Marxist and rooted in the working class, and because of their long history of involvement in the Chilean political system, they were described as the "traditional Left". Their history was characterized by a combination of political, in particular electoral, unity and ideological diversity, resulting in frequent public disagreement.

Their independent origins explain much of the different nature of each party, and in fact they should be seen in two different contexts. The birth of the Chilean Communist party was as a local labour movement which then adopted the framework of international Marxism-Leninism. The movement was founded by Luis Emilio Recabarren in 1912 in the mining areas of the desert pampas of northern Chile.

> Coming into those lowlands, facing those stretches of sand, is like visiting the moon. This region that looks like an

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1. On the Communist and Socialist parties, see: J-P. Bernard, et al., Guide to the Political Parties of South America, Middlesex 1973, 247-53; B.G. Burnett, Political Groups in Chile, Austin 1970, 170-7; F.G. Gil, The Political System of Chile, Boston 1966, 278-90; E. Halperin, Nationalism and Communism in Chile, Cambridge 1965, 42-170; J. Petras, Politics and Social Forces in Chilean Development, Berkeley 1969, 158-196; B. Pollack, 'The Chilean Socialist Party' in Journal of Latin American Studies, May 1978, 117-152.

> empty planet holds my country's great wealth, but the white fertilizer and the red mineral have to be extracted from the arid earth and the mountains of rock. There are few places in the world where life is so harsh and offers so little to live for.[2]

Among the nitrate miners ("Those men locked inside walls of silence, in the loneliest region and under the loneliest sky"[3]), Recabarren set up union centres, newspapers, and generally organized the workers' movement. The Communist party, established in 1922, retained control of the Chilean labour movement, and unionized workers continued to provide the base support of the party.[4] Only in the late 1950's did the party begin to extend its following to the peasantry. Although the membership of a number of leading Chilean intellectuals, economists, historians, writers, and most notably the poet Pablo Neruda, brought the party prestige and respect, the labour leadership was the dominant influence within the party.[5]

The origins of the Chilean Socialist party, which lay in the world economic crisis of the 1930's and dissatisfaction with the Communist party, placed it in another context: the rising tide of Latin American nationalism. The immediate cause of the amalgamation of five small socialist movements into the Socialist party in 1933 was the overthrow in the previous year of Marmaduke Grove's twelve-day socialist republic. This republic, with a simple humanitarian programme, was in turn a result of the severe

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2. P. Neruda, Memoirs, Middlesex 1978, 167. Neruda himself represented this region as a Communist senator in the late 1940's.

3. Ibid., 169.

4. Unionized workers comprised only 15 to 20 per cent of the working class.

5. see Gil, 280-1.

economic and social pressures brought on by the Great Depression, and the consequent political repression of the Ibáñez dictatorship (1927-31). One of the effects of the Depression was a new awareness of Chile's integration in the world capitalist economy. Some Chilean economists, for example Aníbal Pinto, dated Chile's persistent post-war economic problems back to the dislocations of the 1930's.[6]

The Socialist party was also an expression of dissatisfaction with Communist leadership of the Left. At this time the Communist party, changed from the days of Recabarren, was inward - looking and dogmatic; its world-wide strategy had little appeal for Chileans, and it had no great following among the lower classes. The Socialist inspiration was for a clearly nationalist approach to Chilean problems -- they steadfastly refused to join any Internationals. Moreover, the Socialists' self-declared Marxism was seen as a practical orientation, not as a dogma.[7] Allende, one of the founders of the party, discussed its conception in these terms in his interview with Régis Debray.

> ... when we analysed the situation in Chile, and we believed that there was a place for a Party which, while holding similar views in terms of philosophy and doctrine - a Marxist approach to the interpretation of history - would be a Party free of ties of an international nature. However, this did not mean that we would disavow proletarian internationalism... The Communist Party was characteristically a closed, inward-looking party.[8]

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6. Aníbal Pinto's best-known book is, Chile, un caso de desarollo frustrado, Santiago 1959.

7. Halperin, 150.

8. R. Debray, The Chilean Revolution, New York 1971, 62.

Thus, the ideological nature of the two parties reflected their origins: the Communists were utilitarian believers, the Socialists were ideological sceptics, defined as much by what they were against as what they were for.

The basic ideology of the Communist party was rooted in Marxist-Leninist philosophy. The PC consistently supported the unity of the international communist movement under the leadership of the Soviet Union Communist party, "the cradle of Leninism".[9] Because of their international alignment, they were frequently charged with subservience to an outside power, and with importing theories rather than developing genuinely nationalist solutions to Chilean problems. During the period of British exploitation of Chilean nitrates, Recarbarren replied to this criticism in a speech in the Chamber of Deputies. His response, in nationalist terms, reflected his sensitivity to the charge.

> No capitalist can criticise our international sentiments, since nothing is more international than capital. Capital has no homeland, no flag - none, that is, aside from the pound sterling.[10]

With the end of the nitrate boom and the emergence of the United States as the predominant foreign power in Chile, anti-imperialism in practice became synonymous with anti-Americanism.

> The strong anti-Yankee feeling, always present in some form in Latin America... has served the Communists well in their efforts to direct the formidable currents of nationalism to their advantage and to conceal the inherent antagonisms between communism and nationalism.[11]

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9. Halperin, 101.

10. L.E. Recabarren, 'The Dawn of Social Revolution in Chile' in L.E. Aguilar (ed.), Marxism in Latin America, New York 1968, 93.

11. Gil, 280.

To the principal theme of anti-imperialism, the Communist party added: full state participation in all economic activities, democratization of the educational system, electoral reforms to extend suffrage, and reform of the political system.[12]

Yet the close adherence of the Chilean Communisty party to the Moscow line remained its most vulnerable side. Not only could political opponents accuse the party leadership of subservience as it followed the vicissitudes of Soviet international policy, but Soviet action also provoked serious internal discord. The 1956 revelations of Stalin's atrocities implicated a number of Chilean Communist leaders, while the prompt support of the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1967 dismayed many party members, such as the poet Nicanor Parra.

The contrasting ideological openness of the Socialists saw them go from anti-Communism to the Popular Front, to Peronism, to Titoism, to Castroism, to, at least partially, Maoism.[13] This could have seemed like ideological permissiveness, and did so to many, but the Socialists were strongly centred in the nationalist ethic. It was their fierce nationalism which enabled them to identify with the right-wing Argentine leader, Peron, and to support electorally in their own country the authoritarian nationalism of Ibáñez in the 1950's.

Related to the nationalist ethic was that of a "third position", later embodied in the "Third World" concept. Peron, Tito, Castro and Mao had all pursued an independent path: the first attempted a neutralist line between capitalism and Marxist

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12. Ibid., 278.

13. see Pollack, 146.

socialism; the other three deviated significantly from the Moscow line of communism. The Chilean Socialists presented a strong Latin American identity, stressing from the 1930's onwards the need for a united Latin American continent in the face of U.S. imperialism. In the post-war Cold War climate, they rejected the Communist policy of military blocs and the theory of the two camps, capitalist and socialist. Soviet pressure on Yugoslavia and her invasion of Hungary were cited as repressive reflections of this policy.[14] Even the pro-Chinese line of the PS has been interpreted as stemming more from anti-Sovietism.[15]

Over two other ideological tenets the Communists and Socialist leaders came into occasionally bitter conflict, in which the PS competed with the PC "from the left". Both tenets proceeded from the Popular Front strategy adopted by the Comintern in 1935 and adhered to by the Communist Party. The first of these was that of the "peaceful way", which involved participation in national and local elections to secure democratic power in the hands of the people. In reply to criticism of the "peaceful way" by Chinese Communist leaders in 1963, PC Secretary-General Luis Corvalán defended it as the way of mass revolutionary struggle, and argued that armed revolution should be adopted only when all peaceful avenues were locked. He maintained that although the content of the revolution was generally identical in all Latin American countries, "All Marxist-Leninists agree that each revolutionary process has its own distinctive features" and "the choice of either the peaceful or non-peaceful path is the prerogative of the

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14. Halperin, 149-50.

15. see Pollack, 137.

revolutionaries in the given country.[16] Chile's strong democratic tradition allowed the first. The period of political ostracism and repression (1948-58) may have hardened the Communists' resolve to pursue this legal, "low profile" approach.

The Socialists' attitude to the debate was more confused. On the one hand, they consistently asserted that violent revolution to overthrow the existing order would be in the end inevitable; on the other, they equally consistently participated in elections. To clear this paradox, Raúl Ampuero, long-time secretary-general of the Socialist party until he led a small break-away group in 1967, distinguished between the "peaceful road" and the "electoral road". He recognized that the "people's movement has always used all legal means whenever possible", but contrasted this with the conciliatory participation in the formalist democratic institutions, his accusation against the PC.[17] But beyond this rationalization, two other factors explained the paradox. Firstly, there was a strong current of anti-parliamentarian feeling within the Socialist party, which gave them another affinity with Ibáñez. Secondly, the Party was comprised of diverse elements, from moderate parliamentarians like Allende to the young militants headed by Carlos Altamirano, who sympathised with the clandestine MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left).

The other Popular Front tenet followed by the Communist party was that the workers' revolutionary movement should seek an alliance with progressive, nationalist bourgeois groups to form a National Liberation Front. The PC had played a major role in, and benefitted from, the Popular Front government (1938-41) led by the Radicals.

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16. L. Corvalán, 'The Peaceful Way - a Form of Revolution' in Peace, Freedom and Socialism, Dec 1963, 7-8.
17. Halperin, 151.

They saw the bourgeois democratic tradition as an obstacle to attempts by "ultra-reactionaries" to engineer coups by the armed forces,[18] in which event the Communist party would amost certainly be banned.

The Socialists rejected the concept of the National Liberation Front in favour of a Workers' Front. Although the leadership of the party was comprised primarily of middle-class intellectuals, they believed that the middle class had lost all creative energy and tended to preserve the value system of the upper class.[19] They did not make a distinction between the imperialist and nationalist bourgeoisie as the PC did. Even the moderate Allende said in 1971, "The penetration and domination of foreign capital has increased to such an extent over the last few years that the so-called national bourgeoisie has virtually disappeared."[20] Thus, to remain true to its anti-imperialist commitment, the revolutionary movement should be solely proletarian in composition.[21] This naturally precluded a coalition with the Centre-left, predominantly middle-class Radical and Christian Democrat parties. The Socialist attitude was reinforced by their unhappy participation in the Popular Front, an experience which caused major dissensions within the party. The creation of FRAP (Popular Action Front) in 1957, with its exclusion of the Radicals, followed the Socialist line. This time it was the Communists who were uneasy, seeking a broader alliance. FRAP's formation also reunited the Chilean

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18. Corvalán, 3.

19. Gil, 288. F.B. Pike, Chile and the United States, 1880-1962, Indiana 1963, 284-7, discusses the tendency of the Chilean middle class to emulate the upper class.

20. Debray, 70.

21. Halperin, 143-4.

Socialists after their division over support for Ibanez.

Yet despite these idelogical differences, the two Marxist parties generally displayed political unity, revealed in a series of electoral alliances. In itself, this suggested that the Chilean Left was primarily political rather than ideological in orientation. Firstly, the very nature of the parties, especially the PC, with their commitment to the interests of labour preceding their commitment to Marxism, gave them a pragmatic bent.[22]

Secondly, the fact that the two Marxist parties worked from within the existing political system gave them a basically political rather than revolutionary background and orientation. This integration into the system was a source both of strength and of weakness to them. The Communist and Socialist parties benefitted from the electoral process, which had almost brought them victory in 1958 and did so in 1970, and from the institutional system, in obtaining socio-economic benefits for their supporters, unionized workers in particular. Their relative success also gave the Marxist Left a pragmatic air and encouraged them to continue to operate inside the system.

On the other hand, the existing political system had also rubbed off on the Marxists.

> Chilean society, though changing and modernizing, has extended to the new urban activities and classes a traditional clientele system of political domination which is structurally and functionally incompatible with the organization of a modern and effective democracy.[23]

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22. see L.E. Aguilar, 'Political Traditions and Perspectives' in Problems of Communism, May-June 1971, 64-6.

23. O. Sunkel, 'Change and Frustration in Chile' in C. Veliz (ed.), Obstacles to Change in Latin America, London 1965, 34.

The very success of the Marxist parties was a sign of their adaption to clientelistic politics. They exhibited the same vertical party networks and dual structure as other political parties in Chile: the centre, in Santiago, consisting of the party leadership and the ideological arena, and the local electoral arena, which was clientelistic in nature. Hence, the Marxist parties were themselves contributing to a paternalistic political system which it was their aim to overthrow.[24] In one sense, the ideological contest between the PC and the PS also represented competiton for the same electorate.

While the political situation in Chile favoured consensus and the "rules of the game", then the Communists with their stronger political consciousness were the more effective. But if events charged a situation of greater polarization, as in the early 1960's, then the Socialists, with their more revolutionary consciousness, were likely to come to the fore. In such a situation ideological differences between the Communists and Socialists, and within the Socialist party itself, were also likely to emerge from behind the more usual political unity. However, the long immersion of the Marxist parties in the Chilean political system had faded their revolutionary impetus; as a theatre critic complained, "In Chile even the Left is bourgeois."[25]

The decade of the 1960's saw the "traditional Left" overshadowed by more vigorous groups offering major reform. Its

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24. see A. Valenzuela, 'Political Constraints to the Establishment of Socialism in Chile' in A. and J.S. Valenzuela (eds.), Chile: Politics and Society, New Brunswick 1976, 10-13.

25. H. Ehrmann, 'Theatre in Chile' in The Drama Review, Winter 1970, 80.

relativist position seemed weak and compromised amid a debate of increasing polarity: democratic reform or armed revolution. The intensity and absolutist nature of the debate also elevated political discussion from the individual national level to a continental one, and to hemispheric significance with the intimate involvement of the United States.

The new political debate was initiated by the Cuban Revolution that came to power with the fall of the dictator Batista in 1959. Yet the Revolution may have remained of national significance only, had not the Cuban leaders claimed for it a continental validity. Fidel Castro pronounced that "the Andes will be the Sierra Maestra of Latin America",[26] determined to provoke the traditional Left in Latin America out of its complacency.

From the Cuban Revolution emanated the inspiration and ideological perspective of the New Left. Castro and Ernesto "Ché" Guevara, the two main theorists of the Revolution, generalized from their personal Cuban experience:

> We consider that the Cuban Revolution contributed three fundamental lessons to the conduct of revolutionary movements in America. They are:
>
> (1) Popular forces can win a war against the army.
> (2) It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can create them.
> (3) In underdeveloped America, the countryside is the basic area for armed fighting.[27]

These theses were sustained by a call to immediate action, of which armed revolution and Castro's export of guerrilla warfare were reflections. A large part of the appeal and confidence of

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26. Halperin, 67. The Sierra Maestra was the mountain range in the east of Cuba where Castro and his guerrillas began their insurrection.

27. E. Guevara, Guerrilla Warfare, New York 1961, 15.

the New Left was due to the audacity of Castro's Success in Cuba, and the supremacy of action over talk. The Cuban leader threw down the challenge to those on the continent who called themselves revolutionaries: "the duty of the revolutionary is to make revolution."[28]

The traditional Left, and especially the Communists, found themselves in a difficult position regarding the Castroite revolutionary challenge. Previously they had criticized the tactics of armed revolution as "adventurist". Yet while they were patiently preparing the revolutionary consciousness of the proletarian masses, the Cuban Revolution was an accomplished fact - a nationalist, socialist revolution that had succeeded in defying the United States. The Communist parties were in danger of being left behind and of missing out on the considerable prestige of the New Left in the early 1960's.

More important than the immediate ideological differences, the New Left embodied a change of nature from that of the traditional Left: a change in mood, from a relative to an absolute perspective, and a change in character, from the supremacy of the party to the supremacy of the revolutionary, which gave the New Left a personalist quality.

The coherence of the New Left and the changes it introduced were found in the person of the guerrilla fighter. The guerrilla was, as described by Ché Guevara, the focus of the revolutionary struggle. Apart from his actual combat duties, he was "the thrusting engine of mobilization, the generator of revolutionary

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28. F. Castro, Fidel Castro Speaks, (M. Kenner and J. Petras, eds.), Middlesex 1972, 137.

awareness and militant enthusiasm."[29] In his interaction with the peasantry the guerrilla provided ideological and other guidance, which resulted in a progressive radicalization of the revolutionary movement.[30] But the guerrilla should also provide an example in his own life.

> The guerrilla fighter, as a person conscious of a role in the vanguard of the people, must have a moral conduct that shows him to be a true priest of the reform to which he aspires... The guerrilla soldier should be an ascetic.[31]

The guerrilla image combined morality with romanticism, even mysticism. It held an appeal of astringency and purity, an offer of personal wholeness, which found its highest expression in the person of Guevara himself.

> In this man who so painfully embodied the most magnificant coherence, intellectuals could see themselves promoted to guerrillas, and guerrillas to intellectuals. Ché gave every revolutionary in America the element each was missing. Once again, revolutionaries could hammer out their own theory in the furnace of the day-to-day struggle.[32]

Thus whereas the party supplied the ideology to the traditional Left, in the New Left the revolutionary found his own, improvising as he went along rather than playing to a score. While orthodox Communists engaged in what American author Norman Mailer described as "sound as brickwork" logic, the Cuban revolutionaries thrived on paradox. In contrast with the business-like approach of the traditional Left, the new generation rediscovered passion as a revolutionary characteristic.

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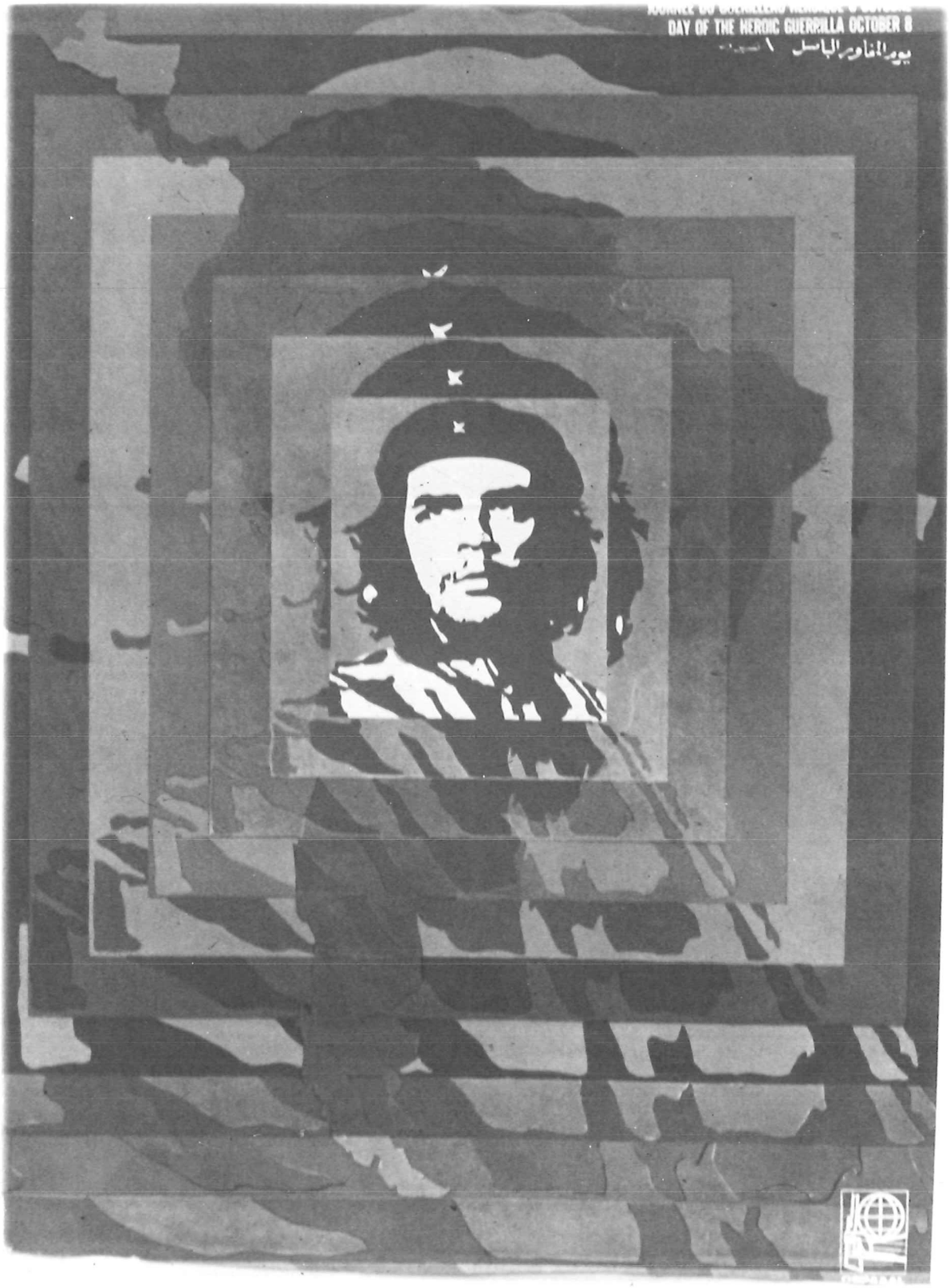
29. J.D. Martz, 'Doctrine and Dilemmas of the Latin American "New Left"' in World Politics, Jan 1970, 176.

30. Guevara, 44-5.

31. Ibid., 43.

32. R. Debray, A Critique of Arms, I, Middlesex 1977, 17.



Ché Guevara

The other face of the personal romanticism of the guerrilla image was a desire for self-sacrifice and purgation, a desire to serve humanity together with a tendency to violence. The irony inherent in the image, frequently perceived by Guevara himself, was well described by Neruda.

> In a way, this cult of risk was encouraged by the romantic spirit and the wild guerrilla theories that swept Latin America... The flaw in this line of reasoning is its political weakness: it is sometimes possible for a great guerrilla and a powerful mind to coexist, as in the case of Ché Guevara, but that is an exception and wholly dependent on chance. The survivors of a guerrilla war cannot lead a proletarian state simply because they were braver, or because they were luckier in the face of death, or better shots when facing the living.[33]

The puritanism inherent in Guevara's conception of the guerrilla stemmed from the major theme of the New Left, the degradation of the individual and collective life in Latin America, for which United States imperialism was largely responsible.

> Our aspirations to victory may be summed up thus: total destruction of imperialism by eliminating its firmest bulwark: imperialist domination by the United States of America... What a luminous near-future would be visible to us if two, three or many Viet Nams flourished throughout the world...[34]

The moral element was also reflected in a spirit of total commitment and complete rejection of compromise. The New Left repudiated the incrementalist, relativist approach of the old Communists, particularly in relationship to the middle classes.

> In the actual historic conditions of Latin America, the national bourgeoisie cannot lead the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggle. Experience shows that in our nations that class, even when its interests are in contradiction to those of Yankee imperialism, has been incapable of confronting it, for it is paralysed by fear of social revolution and frightened by the cry of the exploited masses.[35]

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33. Neruda, 330-1.

34. Ché Guevara, quoted by Martz, 175-6.

35. Castro, 162-3.

The commitment of the New Left to "final" solutions to social and national development was alien to Latin American political conflict during the forties and fifties.[36] Indeed, the followers of Castro were widely known as the "Jacobin Left".

It was the role of the guerrilla, rather than the more obvious ideological differences, which was the primary threat of the Castroite Left to the orthodox Communists, in essence a question of who was to lead the Latin American Revolution. In maintaining the primary role of the guerrilla fighter in the revolutionary process, Castro denied the Communist parties their self-assigned role of revolutionary vanguard.[37] Moreover, in pronouncing that the guerrilla fighters must be directed from the countryside, he was uprooting the Communists from their support base, the urban proletariat.[38] With a newcomer's audacity he asked the Communist parties to prove their revolutionary character: "Their attitude toward the guerrilla struggle will define the communists in Latin America.[39]

The most faithful adherents in Chile to Cuban revolutionary methods came from the young, in the parties of the Left, and particularly among students. Because university students in Chile, as elsewhere in Latin America, were a very small percentage of young people, they naturally made up a special social group,

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36. M.D. Wolpin, 'The Trans-National Appeal of the Cuban Revolution: Chile, 1958-1970' in Caribbean Quarterly, March 1973, 11. This uncompromising spirit pervades Castro's speeches in the 1960's, see Fidel Castro Speaks.

37. L.E. Aguilar, 'Fragmentation of the Marxist Left' in Problems of Communism, July-Aug 1970, 6.

38. see Castro, 185-6, 227.

39. see ibid, 179-206.

> looked up to by the uneducated for ideas and leadership and sought out by the older generation of societal leaders as their heirs. In short, they are the achievers and they hold in their grasp the greatest chance for power and position.[40]

But even then, there was a lack of correlation between positions of employment and demand for them. Exacerbated by Chile's stagnating economy, this situation could be avoided only by the creation of new administrative posts by the state. Halperin argues that the real issue in the nationalist struggle was the conquest of the state in order to provide employment, which, together with a transparent need for social justice and the idealism of the young, produced guerrilla movements.[41]

> These movements express the despair of young members of the administrative class, radicalized and alienated from society by the deterioration of their prospects in countries of stagnating economy. In case of success, the movements offer political power and a new role for the administrative class: the administration of profound and worthwhile social change instead of mere paper-pushing in a deteriorating welfare-bureaucracy.[42]

The main Castroite group in Chile, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) emerged in 1966 from the University of Concepción, the most politically developed of the Chilean universities.[43] Consciously fidelista, the MIR looked mainly to rural based guerrilla warfare, while seeking to radicalize the peasants. Prior to 1970, however, it mainly advertized itself

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40. B.G. Burnett, Political Groups in Chile, Austin 1970, 72-3.

41. see E. Halperin, Terrorism in Latin America, Beverly Hills 1976, 23-38.

42. Ibid., 51-2.

43. see Burnett, 71, 86.

through guerrilla activities, also a means of obtaining funds. The MIR was fundamentally opposed to the "soft" policy of the Chilean Communist party, believing in the inevitability of violent revolution and the need to reject an alliance with the national bourgeoisie.[44] In its 1970 response to the Popular Unity victory, the movement quoted Saint Just of the French Revolution: "Whoever makes a revolution by half, only succeeds in digging his own grave."[45]

The Chilean Communist party, while attempting to tone down the violent/peaceful debate, reaffirmed the "peaceful road" in Chile until this proved closed. (Guevara in fact reached a similar conclusion, an indication that armed revolution was not the primary question.

> Where a government has come into power through some form of popular vote, fraudulent or not, and maintains at least an appearance of constitutional legality, the guerrilla outbreak cannot be promoted, since the possibilities of peaceful struggle have not yet been exhausted.)[46]

Secretary-General Corvalán accepted the Cuban Revolution as an example, but not as a formula for revolution in Chile.[47] The Communists were more interested in Cuba's rapid transition to socialism after 1959, and also in the new sense of moral sensitivity and community spirit that Castro's regime had brought to Cuba.[48]

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44. see Movimiento di Izquierda Revolucionaria, 'The Implications of the Electoral Result for the Revolutionary Left' in R. Debray, Conversations with Allende, London 1971, 163-190.
45. Ibid., 182.
46. Guevara, 16.
47. Halperin, Nationalism and Communism in Chile, 68-9.
48. Ibid., 74.

Nevertheless, as the Chilean Communist party was the strongest orthodox party in Latin America and the most loyal to the Soviet Communist party outside the Soviet bloc, its relations with Havana inevitably paralleled the ambivalent relationship of Castro and Moscow.

The more romantic, ideologically open, and nationalistic Socialist party in Chile was by its nature more attracted to the Cuban Revolution. Castro's rejection, after the event, of the middle class allies, and his adoption of a line independent from the Soviet Union, appealed to the Socialists. Furthermore, they responded more enthusiastically to Castro's pragmatic Marxism and to his charismatic leadership than did the Communists. The Cuban Revolution gave the Socialists the chance to show that they were more revolutionary than the PC, their natural inclination being to compete with the Communists "from the left".[49]

The tangible effect of the Cuban Revolution in Chile was that the Socialist party forced the Communist party to accept a radicalization of FRAP's programme in 1961. From a moderate 1958 platform, in which only the nationalization of the ITT subsidiary, the Chilean Telephone and Telegraph Company, was called for, the Chilean Left demanded the expropriation of all major domestic and foreign-owned corporations in Chile, the abrogation of military assistance agreements with the United States, a "democratic" reorganisation of Chilean political institutions, rejection of US aid that came with conditions, and the restructuring of the OAS (Organisation of American States) to check its use as an instrument of American foreign policy.[50] The more radical programme, by increasing the

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49. Ibid., 141.
50. Ibid., 64; Wolpin, 24.

distance between the Left and the Centre parties, also temporarily put an end to Communist hopes for a broad multi-class coalition. Inasmuch as this programme contained the broad outline of the 1970 Popular Unity programme, one can trace the latter back to the Cuban Revolution as catalyst. "As an evocative symbol, Cuba weakened the fatalismo which had traditionally exerted a moderating force upon egalitarian nationalists in Chile.[51]

The radicalization of FRAP represented the adoption by the traditional Left of a position closer to that of the New Left. The Castroite Left softened its attitude towards the traditional Marxist parties in the second half of the decade, when two developments emerged to check the initial confidence of the Cuban alternative: the continent-wide failure of Castroite guerrilla movements, and Cuba's faltering economic performance.

The years 1965-7 were marked by a string of defeats for guerrilla movements working to the Cuban formula, culminating in the death of Guevara in Bolivia. His death revealed the essentially fragmented nature of the revolutionary movement, tragically just after his own message to the Tricontinental Conference in Havana called for the international emergence of "two, three or many Vietnams". The reassessment which followed the failure of the armed revolutionaries found that the Castroite theory of revolution

> greatly simplified the actual events of 1959, reducing what was in fact a complex set of circumstances favouring Castro to a heroic single-minded triumph of peasant rebels fighting in the mountains of the Sierra Maestra.[52]

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51. Wolpin, 7.

52. Aguilar, 'Fragmentation of the Marxist Left', 7.

In particular, the element of surpirse had been lost. Whereas Castro had faced the demoralized army of Batista, the revolutionaries of the 1960's faced troops who had learnt from the Cuban experience and were trained in counter-insurgency methods. Nor did the United States adopt a neutral stance, as it had with Castro. The Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes observed that Cuba had made revolution in Latin America both more imperative and more difficult.[53] The Chilean Communist paper, El Siglo, evaluated Guevara's death thus: "All this confirms that the guerrilla nucleus is not sufficient to trigger a revolution."[54]

The economic shortcomings of the Cuban government were revealed in 1970 when the country failed to achieve the ten million ton sugar harvest personally pledged by Castro. In the Chilean presidential campaign of 1970, the Right made political capital out of Castro's July 26 speech to the Cuban people, when he admitted to having made mistakes over the economy. Henceforth, the Cuban leaders were preoccupied with internal matters and a growing dependence upon the Soviet Union. The economic crisis signified the end of the romantic, spontaneous stage of the Cuban Revolution, although that spirit lingered on among partisans of the New Left.[55]

Thus, by the end of the 1960's, the traditional Left was in a position to reject the political challenge of the New Left, while

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53. Martz, 191.

54. 13 July, 1968, quoted by Aguilar, 'Fragmentation of the Marxist Left', 8.

55. J. Edwards, Persona Non Grata; an envoy in Castro's Cuba, London 1977, is a record by the Chilean Charge d'Affaires in Havana of the change in mood of the Cuban Revolution in 1970.

they incorporated the change of mood brought by the Cuban Revolution. In particular they adopted Castro's absolute position against the United States: the number one enemy against which to rally the heterogeneous forces of the Left. But by retaining the political form of the traditional Left, of political parties integrated in the existing democratic system, the Chilean Left was as unsuited to such an absolutist ideology as the guerrilla movement was suited to it. This left doubt as to the political capability of the Left to fulfil its ideology should it come to power. Octavio Paz described this paradoxical nature of the Left.

> Not only is it divided into many factions, it is also - more seriously and crucially - torn between the relative weakness of its forces and the geometric absoluteness of its programmes. It is as if we tried to drill rocks with a needle.[56]

The Castroite challenge to the traditional Marxist parties for leadership of the Revolution came "from the left". Another challenge, interrelated but much closer at hand, came "from the right", that of the Christian Democratic party (PDC) representing the democratic reformist side of the 1960's dichotomy. Although basically a party of the Centre, there are several reasons why an appreciation of Christian Democracy in Chile is important to an understanding of the Left. Under the leadership of Eduardo Frei, in 1964 the Christian Democrats pre-empted the Marxist Left as proponents of major structural reform in Chile. Some aspects of the Frei government (1964-70) had a major influence on the Chilean Left immediately prior to its own period of government, and indeed the period of the Christian Democrat administration moulded

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56. O. Paz, 'The Centurions of Santiago' in Dissent, Spring 1974, 354.

decisively the nature of the 1970 election which allowed the Left to gain office. Moreover, on two occasions, in 1969 and 1971, sectors of the PDC defected to join the Left in coalition; these were generally the younger, more ideologically committed members of the party.

As with the New Left challenge, that of the Christian Democrats was translated into ideological terms, due largely to the polarized intensity of political debate and to the strong feeling of ideological purity among the Christian Democrats in 1964. The PDC presented a combination of Christian inspiration and technical professionalism, in order to attain an ideal "communitarian" society which would respond to both the individual and social aspects of man's nature. Eduardo Frei, one of Chile's leading intellectuals as well as a charismatic political leader, captured this combination in his writings:

> The foundations of a humanistic economy should be the result of an encounter between our philosophy and the scientific experience that emerges from the economy - the vivid comprehension of the reality in which we live and the will for presence by the Christian as a constructive element in the society to which he belongs....[57]

The predecessor of the PDC, the Falange Nacional, broke away from the traditional Catholic party in Chile, the Conservative party, in the 1930's precisely over the question of the political implications of Catholicism. Whereas for the Conservatives these were a paternalistic and hierarchical form of democracy based on an economic doctrine of classical liberal capitalism, the young Falangists saw the need for a pluralistic form of democracy, in which freedoms were guaranteed yet

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57. E. Frei, 'Christian Democracy in Theory and Practice' in P.E. Sigmund (ed.), The Ideologies of the Developing Nations, New York 1963, 318.

where there was a degree of economic planning and intervention by the State.

One source of justification for the humanistic nature of the PDC's Christian inspiration was papal social encyclicals which were critical of the excesses of both "liberal" capitalism and of "collectivist" socialism.[58] Frei attacked both capitalism, which in its classical form dehumanized the economy, and communism, which had the same results but was statist and bureaucratic by nature.[59] In expounding a "third way", Frei saw that the state must respect, and indeed encourage, intermediate organisms between the individual and the state, such as the family, city, region, trade union and business enterprise.[60] The strengthening of these organisms would weaken the traditional paternalistic structure of society.

Another source was the writings of the French Catholic philosopher, Jacques Maritain, who saw democracy as the form of government most consistent with the Christian gospel.[61] However, despite this pervading Christian inspiration and the fact that nearly all the party leaders were devout Catholics, the PDC stressed that it was a non-confessional party.[62]

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58. P.E. Sigmund, The Overthrow of Allende, Pittsburgh 1977, 31. The papal encyclicals were Rerum Novarum of Leo XIII (1891) and Quadragesimo Anno of Pius XI (1931).

59. Frei, 'Christian Democracy', 311-3.

60. Ibid., 315.

61. Sigmund, 32.

62. E. Frei, 'Paternalism, Pluralism, and Christian Democratic Reform Movements in Latin America' in W.V. D'Antonio and F.B. Pike (eds.), Religion, Revolution, and Reform, London 1964, 37.

Therefore, Christian Democracy lined up against the Marxist Left as a movement based on a completely different ideology, a difference emphasized by Frei.

> Clearly then, all the Catholics in Latin America are not in the Christian Democratic movement. Many good Catholics think that there is another way. Perhaps the only thing we agree on is that this other way must be opposed to Communism. The challenge of Communism is not the challenge of any ordinary political party. It is the challenge of another civilization, another system of life, another interpretation of man. This is the reason why the political challenge in our country is a total challenge.[63]

The communitarian ideal was a corporate view of society, "in which capital and labour are no longer divorced and therefore do not come into conflict, no longer belong to different groups but are united in the same hands".[64] The Christian Democrats thus rejected the notion of class struggle that was integral to a Marxist conception of society, Frei delcaring that he was President of all Chileans.

The Chilean Marxists responded in kind. A leading Communist, Orlando Millas, wrote of Christian Democracy,

> a reformist movement of a new type is taking place, a movement with a religious and theological tinge and designed to divert the Latin American revolution and frustrate it. The emergence of this movement is an indication of the deep-seated revolutionary process now under way. But it is an indefinite movement and not very firm... In the sphere of ideological struggle the superiority of Marxism-Leninism is obvious. It is equally obvious that in the face of an adversary who lays claim to a monopoly of humanism and who has appropriated such fundamental Marxist watchwords as revolution, freedom and progress, the ideological struggle assumes first-rate importance.[65]

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63. Frei, in D'Antonio and Pike (eds.), 118-9.

64. Frei, quoted by Halperin, Nationalism and Communism in Chile, 196.

65. O. Millas, 'New Trends in Catholicism and the Policy of the Chilean Communists' in World Marxist Review, March 1964, 28.

Thus the strongly ideological nature of the PDC forced the Marxist Left to define itself more rigorously.

But the need of the two groups to underscore their ideological differences was itself an indication that they were challenging each other for much the same political ground. In response to the same forces that encouraged FRAP to radicalize its programme, the Christian Democrat programme saw a similar radicalization between 1961 and 1964, culminating in the April 1964 commitment to a "Revolution in Liberty", promising major structural reforms, but without the social cost that the class-polarizing Left would incur. The PDC were presenting a democratic reformist alternative for the political, economic and social development of Chile. Self-consciously, deriving largely from the intellectual capabilities of many of the PDC leaders, and especially Frei's active commitment to concepts like Latin American integration, Chilean Christian Democracy showed its desire to have a wider continental significance as well.

In this, the Christian Democrats presented a modern technical professionalism, in particular influenced by the economic theorists associated with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA).[66] The intellectual mentor of this whole generation of Latin American economists was the Argentinian, Dr Raúl Prebisch, who emerged in the late 1940's and early 1950's as the chief framer of the ideology of development planning. ECLA, based in Santiago, stressed the adverse effect on Latin American countries of the long term decline in world market prices for primary products in relation to manufactured goods, the need for structural reform in agriculture

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66. Sigmund, 32.

to make it more productive, and the necessity of Latin American integration to achieve economic efficiency and regional unity in the face of the overwhelming economic power of the United States. The technically oriented, interventionist programme to remedy economic defects attracted the dynamic professional and technician groups to the party.[67]

Frei's election in 1964 and his subsequent government showed an inter-American approach to development, an approach which encouraged and gave focus to the anti-Americanism of the Chilean Left. The challenge of the Cuban Revolution reformulated American policy towards the whole of Latin America. The response was the Alliance for Progress launched by President Kennedy in 1961. Having failed to overthrow Castro, and having unintentionally helped him on his way to Communism in the process, the United States became concerned to avoid "a second Cuba" in the hemisphere. There was a general similarity of objectives between the Alliance and Chilean Christian Democracy: the promotion of structural reform and economic development, through peaceful democratic processes and with the injection of U.S. capital. ECLA doctrines were a common source of inspiration. Frei chose to emphasize the positive motivation behind the Alliance, the response to the needs of the Latin American people.

> The Latin American origins of the Alliance for Progress were especially evident in the non-Marxist political parties which had no links with the national oligarchies and were strongly opposed to the traditional Latin American Right.[68]

He maintained that,

> In fact, the Alliance was essentially a Latin American conception which became reality because it was accepted

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67. Gil, 271-2.

68. E. Frei, 'The Alliance That Lost Its Way' in Foreign Affairs, April 1967, 437.

> by the United States and specially by President Kennedy, who understood it and injected new life into it.[69]

This underscores a feeling of identity between Frei and Kennedy: a common Catholic influence and sense of mission, the technical approach to economic and social problems, anti-Communism, and a charismatic image of youth, vigour, intelligence and optimism. Thus, Chile under a Frei administration was suitable to become the model for the inter-American approach to development. Under the Alliance, Frei's government received more U.S. aid per capita than any other Latin American country, and in absolute terms came second only to Brazil. "The 'openness' of the Chilean political system to these North American inputs and others directed at political and opinion leaders played a significant role in preventing the emergence of more support for the Cuban Revolution."[70]

The press response to Frei's election clearly revealed the alignments and conflicts that were operating. The New York Times editorialized, "The victory is a great relief to every important capital in the Western Hemisphere from Washington to Buenos Aires. Only Havana will fail to rejoice in it."[71] Indeed, Havana did not rejoice, calling the election, "A Victory for Fear, Money, Lies, and Foreign Pressure."[72] In Chile, the conservative newspaper El Mercurio showed why its readers had voted for Frei. In

> the confrontation between free democracy and a Marxist yoke... the hemisphere was under the threat of an alien

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69. Ibid., 441.

70. Wolpin, 14.

71. R.R. Fagen and W.A. Cornelius, Jr. (eds.), Political Power in Latin America, Englewood Cliffs 1970, 33.

72. Ibid., 34.

> extremist penetration which had its bridgehead in Fidel Castro's Cuba. Chile, in the vanguard of democratic rebirth, became the country most menaced by these dangers.[73]

The unanimously recognized failure of the Alliance for Progress and the coincidental decline in the fortunes of the Christian Democrats by 1967, (following the typical boom-and-bust pattern of Chilean presidencies), gave further credence to the belief that U.S. involvement in Chile, far from being beneficial, in fact denied Chile her full sovereignty and hindered her economic development. Edward Korry, U.S. ambassador to Chile at the end of the 1960's, described the process of American entanglement in Chilean affairs.

> I had been appalled by what I found in Chile in 1967. The United States had bound itself publicly to the Frei government. It had become enmeshed in the political affairs of Chile - shockingly so. Dungan [Korry's predecessor, a former Kennedy aide] was described in Washington and Santiago as 'a member of the Frei cabinet'... The United States had taken responsibility for every facet of Chilean life - agriculture, education, health, finance, production, savings and loans, police, and military.[74]

The general view of the Chilean Left was that Frei had been the stooge, either consciously or unconsciously, of American imperialism. Neruda's summation of him was typical. "He is a strange, highly premeditative man... a troubled, serious face, very intent on the needle and thread with which he is sewing together his political life."[75]

Frei himself appeared to realise the fatal marriage he had made with the United States. The title of his 1967 article, "The

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73. Ibid., 31.

74. E. Korry, 'The Sell-Out of Chile and the American Taxpayer' in Penthouse, March 1978, 74.

75. Neruda, 344.

Alliance That Lost Its Way", indicated a liberal view: initial American intentions were benevolent, but unfortunate actions occurred later. Yet in 1971 he wrote,

> The United States has always looked upon us as its back yard. The Monroe Doctrine, the Big Stick, the Good Neighbour policies and the Alliance for Progress have succeeded each other as political expedients.[76]

Frei had allied himself to forces which valued stability over democracy and reformism; the choices he had made early on had turned around to frustrate him.[77] But in the process he had raised expectations among Chileans which had not been satisfied. The Right felt he had moved too fast, the Left that he had not gone far enough: a drift towards polarization began.

Among those dissatisfied with Frei were the leftists of his own party, who wanted to radicalize government measures to pursue the communitarian ideal immediately. Moreover, they began to define communitarianism in socialist terms.[78] The distance between them and the moderates, intensely loyal to Frei, widened when, due to economic pressures, Frei put the break on his "Revolution in Liberty".

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76. E. Frei, 'The Second Latin American Revolution' in Foreign Affairs, Oct 1971, 95.

77. A.L. Michaels, 'The Alliance For Progress and Chile's "Revolution in Liberty", 1964-1970' in Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs, Feb 1976, 87.

78. see Silva and Chonchol, 'Development without Capitalism: toward a communitarian world' in P.E. Sigmund (ed.), Models of Political Change in Latin America, New York 1970, 310-12. 'The Chonchol Plan' in A. von Lazar and R.R. Kaufman (eds.), Reform and Revolution, Boston 1969, 59-70, commissioned by the PDC, developed a "non-capitalist way of development". For the position of the moderates, see W. Thayer, 'Communitarianism and Christian Democracy' in Sigmund (ed.), Models of Political Change, 312-5.

He maintained the importance of economic growth as a prerequisite to social justice. The interpretation of massacres of miners at El Salvador and peasants at Puerto Montt by soldiers as a sign of growing governmental repression led to the defection of the leftist groups, known as the rebeldes, from the PDC in 1969.

Having been politically defeated, and having had much of their ideological ground cut away from underneath them, the Marxist Left in 1964 could do little except wait and hope that Frei failed to fulfil his promises. Frei's "Revolution in Liberty" had promised revolutionary change with a minimum of social conflict, relying on his Christian ideology to inspire Chileans to work for the national interest. If he succeeded, and the Left were not involved, they would become politically redundant. Therefore,

> for the Leftist opposition... an at least superficial participation in the process of reform management is a manner of maintaining contact with grass root sentiments while upkeeping a revolutionary image with a minimum degree of responsibility.[79]

The Communist party chose to support Frei's policies which were similar to its own in essence, which in practice was only its agrarian reform.[80] Otherwise they chose opposition, as over Frei's "Chileanization" of copper. The Socialist party, having similar problems of internal unity as the PDC, refused to collaborate with the Christian Democrats at all, in line with its ideological repudiation of middle-class groups. The political decline of the Frei government in its last few years saw the Left's opposition in Congress increase.

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79. A. von Lazar and L. Quiros Varela, 'Chilean Christian Democracy' in Inter-American Economic Affairs, Spring 1968, 54.

80. Millas, 28.

But in two ways the Left's opposition might rebound to its disadvantage if it gained office. First, the Left was in danger of over-committing itself to ideological positions that it would find difficult to fulfil. Second, it might find itself faced, when in government, with an equally strong and obstructive opposition in Congress.

By the end of the 1960's the "traditional" Left had reasserted itself, partly because of the political decline of its challengers, partly as a result of the mobilizing influence of these challenges. Thus, the Chilean Left in 1970 was no longer "traditional", but a curious amalgam that had evolved from Chile's historical traditions and from the boiling cauldron of the 1960's.

CHAPTER III

THE IDEOLOGY OF THE CHILEAN LEFT

A characteristic of Chilean political behaviour before September 1973 was the importance of ideology as an integral element in the intensely competitive multi-party system. Eduardo Frei, a leading Chilean intellectual as well as the foremost political figure of the 1960's, wrote,

> Politics do not evolve only on a pragmatic plane. People also view politics from a broader philosophical base... The achievement of power no longer means for us, as it does for the people of the United States, simply slight variations in political structures, but rather a change in the entire social structure, requiring new orientations for family, education, state, and man.[1]

By 1964 the vast majority of Chileans had accepted that socio-economic reforms were necessary if Chile was to develop. Yet there were deep differences over the interpretation of methods, style and content. Among the Left itself, far-reaching political implications could be drawn from ideological differences. Ideology served as both a unifying and a divisive element in the seemingly constant flux of disintegration and reformation of political parties.

The ideological dimension also reflected pragmatic political considerations. Both inter-party conflict on the national level and intra-party conflict in the form of factionalism were frequently played out in terms of the interpretation of socio-economic reform.[2]

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1. E. Frei, 'Paternalism, Pluralism, and Christian Democratic Reform Movements in Latin America' in W.V. D'Antonio and F.B. Pike (eds.), Religion, Revolution, and Reform, London 1964, 36-7.

2. A. von Lazar and L. Quiros Varela, 'Chilean Christian Democracy' in Inter-American Economic Affairs, Spring 1968, 53.

The interplay of political forces, or the unanticipated effects of political actions and events, were often interpreted from purely ideological perspectives.

The ideology of the Chilean Left evolved from the interpretation of the "objective conditions" existing in Chile, and was a meshing together of economic, political, and cultural perceptions. The following discussion is based on an impressionistic study of Chilean writings. My concern is with the wider currents of thought expressed, while recognising that there are as many degrees of variation as there are writers.[3]

The roots of the Left's concern lay in the great disparity between the country's natural potential and its actual socio-economic condition. Chile had numerous and diverse natural resources: minerals in the north, Mediterranean-like agricultural land in the central valley, forests and grazing land in the south, sea resources with the extension of the sea-limit to 200 miles, and energy with oil reserves and abundant hydroelectric power from the fast-falling rivers in the Andes. With a relatively low population Chile appeared to have the prerequisites for an integrated, diversified economy.

Yet the economy had never "taken off" as a whole, and seemed caught in a state of partial development. Between 1960-67, Chile's total domestic product grew at an average annual rate of 4.5 per cent, compared with an average Latin American rate of 5.2 per cent.

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3. Although Chilean writers have often discussed Latin America as a whole, I am concerned with the special Chilean relevance of their writing.

Its per capita domestic product growth of 2 per cent compared with a Latin American average of 2.2 per cent.[4] Therefore, even in the context of Latin America, Chile's economic performance was disappointing. A feature of this stagnation was a voracious inflation which engulfed the real value of wages and government development programmes alike, resisting the efforts of successive governments to check it.

The French economist Samir Amin described three features of an economy by which "underdevelopment" was revealed, all of which existed in the Chilean economy in the 1960's. "These are (1) unevenness of productivity as between sectors, (2) disarticulation of the economic system, and (3) domination from outside."[5]

There were large disparities in labour productivity both between and within the sectors of the Chilean economy. The sectors of expanding productivity in the post-war period - mining, manufacturing and construction - were those where employment had not increased, because they were technology and capital intensive. Labour was absorbed into the services sector, whose percentage of the gross national product had decreased, illustrating the incapacity of the system to provide productive work.[6]

Agriculture, the poorest sector in the economy, also showed a decreasing level of productivity, unable either to produce sufficient food for the Chilean population or to provide even the official

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4. ECLA, Economic Survey of Latin America, 1969, New York 1971, 5, table 1.

5. S. Amin, Accumulation on a World Scale, I, New York 1974, 15.

6. see S. de Vylder, Allende's Chile, Cambridge 1976, 11, table 1.2.

minimum wage for most of its workers.

Unionized/non-unionized, modern/traditional, and urban/rural dichotomies in labour productivity had important political as well as economic implications. The extreme heterogeneity in productivity and income dispelled, for example, the notion of a homogeneous working class. It meant also that some workers were included in and some excluded from the political system.

Amin's "disarticulation" of the economic system was characterized by a

> lack of communication between the different sectors of the underdeveloped economy... An advanced economy forms a coherent whole, made up of sectors that carry out substantial exchanges between themselves... Thus, these sectors appear complementary. An underdeveloped economy is, however, made up of sectors that carry out only marginal exchanges among themselves, their exchanges being made essentially with the outside world. Some of these sectors are made up of a few large-scale enterprises - often foreign, and dependent on great international businesses - the governing centres of which are outside the underdeveloped economy.[7]

The extreme unevenness of income distribution in Chile best illustrates this "disarticulation": in 1968, 3.2 per cent of the remunerated population received 42 per cent of the national income, while 47 per cent of the population received 12 per cent, or less than the officially established subsistence wage (sueldo vital).[8] Therefore, the development of any one sector had not had a mobilizing effect on the other sectors; the expected "trickle-down" effect had not occurred in income distribution.

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7. Amin, 16.

8. G. Martner, 'The Economic Aspects of Allende's Government' in K. Medhurst (ed.), Allende's Chile, London 1972, 138.

> Time after time certain sectors have experienced temporary 'booms', usually generated by foreign demand and affecting mineral exports (gold and silver during colonial times, nitrates between 1880 and 1930, copper in the 1950s and 1960s). These booms have largely failed to benefit the economy as a whole, however, and once having come to an end they have left stagnation and misery behind.[9]

Thus, Chileans believed that there was not a lack of economic surplus, but that it was used unproductively or exported.

Other forms of economic concentration and monopoly existed. In industry, the large corporation was predominant. In 1966, of 1,712 nonfinancial corporations in Chile, the 182 largest controlled 78 per cent of the net capital assets, the top 25 controlled one half, the top 5 controlled one quarter.[10] In banking, in 1969, 0.4 per cent of borrowers took 25 per cent of all bank credit, while 28 per cent had access to 2.6 per cent.[11] In agriculture, a 1966 study revealed that 2 per cent of Chilean landowners held 65 per cent of the land, and 78 per cent of the irrigated land, while at the other end of the scale, 37 per cent of landowners held 1 per cent of the land.[12]

Among the top corporations there existed family and other affiliations, forming a group of clans with wide-ranging interests. Prominent among these were the Edwards family, whose interests included the Banco Edwards and El Mercurio, the Yarur family, the Matte/Alessandri group, and the Banco Hipotecario group, known as

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9. De Vylder, 10.

10. M. Zeitlin and R. Ratcliff, 'The Concentration of National and Foreign Capital in Chile, 1966' in A. and J.S. Valenzuela (eds.), Chile: Politics and Society, New Brunswick 1976, 301.

11. Martner in Medhurst (ed.), 137-8.

12. quoted by P.E. Sigmund, The Overthrow of Allende, Pittsburgh 1977, 20.

the Pirañas.[13]

Chile also suffered from geographical and geological "disarticulation". The "shoestring republic" was made up of three separate countries: the northern deserts, the central valley, and the south of forests, fiords and rain. Economic activity and population was concentrated in the central provinces of Valparaiso, Aconagua, O'Higgins, and Santiago, while the shantytowns (callampas) encircling the major cities were evidence of a rural - urban drift. Above all, the capital Santiago was a world apart from the rest of the country: with over one third of the population, the political, bureaucratic and financial centre, and the mechanism through which economic surplus was channelled. The country also experienced frequent earthquakes, which had a major impact on government economic programmes.[14] But the inability of the Chilean economy to ride over natural disasters underlined its precariousness.

Domination of the economy from outside took a variety of forms which, if their theoretical significance or relation to the whole economy could be debated, undoubtedly added up to represent an important foreign dependence. Foreign capital was entrenched in many sectors, traditionally and most visibly in the economically strategic mining sector.[15] Most mineral resources, comprising 89

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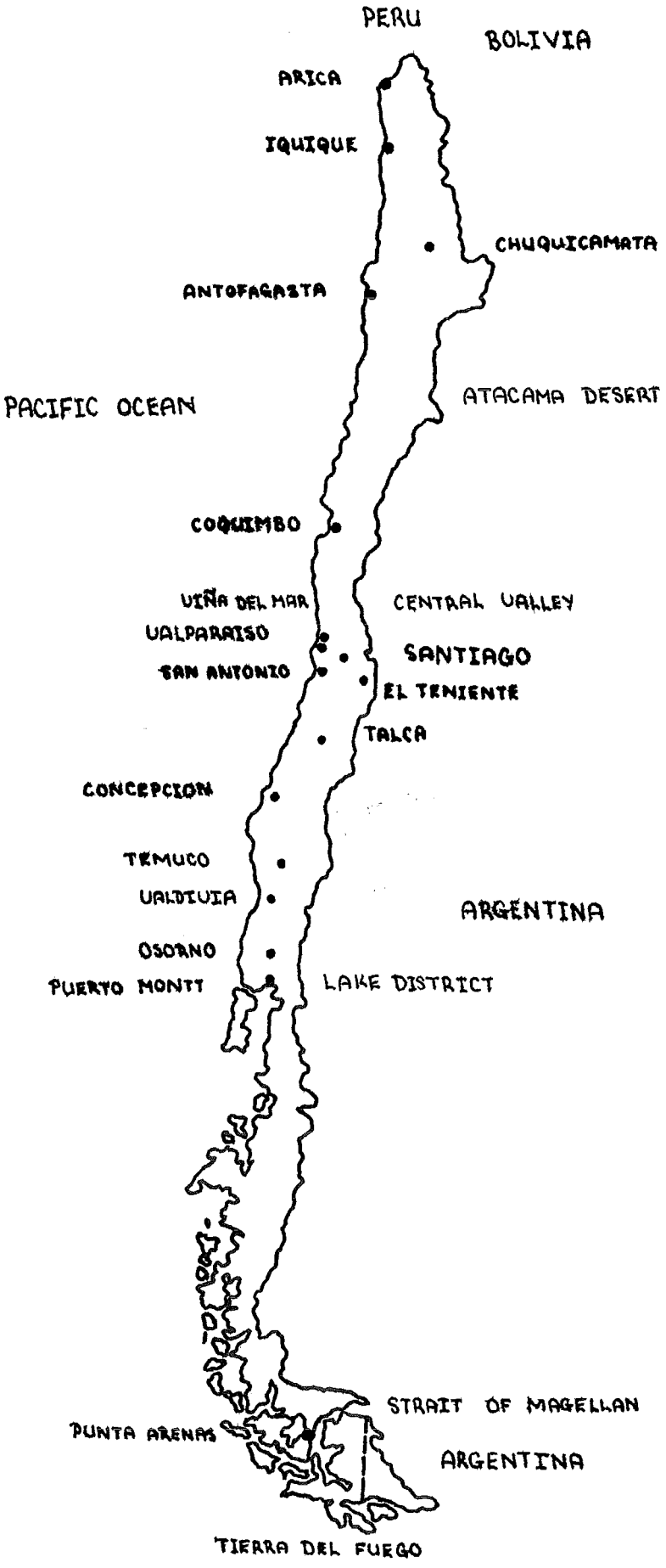
13. see S. del Campo et al., 'The Clans of Chile' in D.L. Johnson (ed.), The Chilean Road to Socialism, Garden City 1973, 395-409.

14. e.g., large earthquakes in May 1960 forced the Alessandri government into greater spending, upsetting its monetary stabilization programme and setting off high inflation again.

15. for details of the major foreign investment in Chile in 1970, see Nacla, New Chile, New York 1973, 149-167.



The Map Of Chile.

per cent of Chile's exports in 1970, of which copper accounted for 78.5 per cent, were directly controlled by foreign interests. The "decapitalization" of Chile, where capital outflow exceeded investment, was most apparent in the case of the copper Gran Mineria (see Table 1).

Table 1. Investments and Profits of the American copper companies (in $U.S.)[16]

Company	Investments (worldwide)	Investments in Chile	Percentage
Anaconda	1,166,172,000	199,030,000	16.64
Kennecott	1,108,155,000	145,877,000	13.16
	Profits (worldwide)	**Profits in Chile**	**Percentage**
Anaconda	99,313,000	78,692,600	79.24
Kennecott	165,395,000	35,338,600	21.37

From an original investment of $3.5 million in the copper industry, the Chilean Copper Corporation (CODELCO) argued that the foreign companies had taken out several billion American dollars over five decades. The investment of local profits meant that the companies did not need to invest further foreign capital.[17]

In the manufacturing and commerce sectors foreign investment, while less in quantitative terms, was increasing and strategically distributed in the fastest growing industries.[18]

Another feature of this foreign presence was a degree of

16. CODELCO in New York Times, 25 Jan., 1971, 72.
17. see ibid.; Nacla, 82-117.
18. see de Vylder, 14.

concentration comparable to that in the whole Chilean economy. The 43 largest foreign-owned corporations represented only 2.5 per cent of all nonfinancial corporations in Chile but controlled 38 per cent of their combined assets. American firms held 87 per cent of all foreign investment in Chile, with British firms holding another 10 per cent. The American investment was dominated by the subsidiaries of just four companies: ITT, American and Foreign Power, Kennecott and Anaconda.[19] There were numerous links between the major Chilean and foreign interests: for example, the Yarur family with W.R. Grace, the Edwards family with the Rockefellers and other American groups.[20]

Foreign loans and aid created new forms of dependence. By 1970 the Chilean public sector had accumulated a foreign debt of over three billion dollars, absorbing a large amount of Chile's export earnings in interest and repayment. The very servicing of this debt required new foreign loans, creating a vicious circle.

> It is this aspect - the overbearing and implacable necessity to obtain foreign financing - which finally sums up the situation of dependence; this is the crucial point in the mechanism of dependence.[21]

Non-capital variants of economic dependence were the necessity to import capital equipment and modern technology. The structure of Chile's imports had changed from consumer to essential goods, a reliance on which compounded the vulnerability of Chile's balance-of-payments.

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19. see Zeitlin and Ratcliff in Valenzuela (eds.), 303-5.

20. see R. Ratcliff, 'The Ties that Bind - Chilean Industrialists and Foreign Corporations' in Nacla, 79-81.

21. O. Sunkel, 'National Development Policy and External Dependence in Latin America' in Journal of Development Studies, Oct. 1969, 31.

> Having been a producer of capital equipment in the nineteenth century, Chile now has to import 90 per cent of its investment in plant and equipment. Provided by nature with ample coal, petroleum and hydraulic resources, Chile nevertheless has to import fuels. Having been a major exporter of wheat and livestock products, Chile is now highly dependent on food imports from the metropolis.[22]

Thus, the hypothetical Chilean Revolution concerned the economic, social and political development of the country. On the political level it was a question of leadership. On the ideological level, the Revolution was a search for national identity: the definition of development in terms of human images. The quest for identity pervaded political, intellectual and creative writing in Chile, reflected in Eduardo Frei's remark that Latin America was like a character in search of an author.[23]

Creative artists expressed a strong New World feeling. Jean Franco notes that Chilean writers have been "among those most absorbed with the virgin nature of America."[24] Gabriela Mistral and Pablo Neruda, Chile's two Nobel prize-winning poets, both wrote of the country's primitive and untamed landscapes with the harsh, abundant voices of the American consciousness. Neruda said,

> there are in our countries rivers which have no names, trees which nobody knows, and birds which nobody has described. It is easier for us to be surrealistic because everything we know is new... Everything has been painted in Europe, everything has been sung in Europe. But not in America.[25]

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22. A.G. Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America, New York 1969, 102.

23. E. Frei, 'The Second Latin American Revolution' in Foreign Affairs, Oct. 1971, 87.

24. J. Franco, The Modern Culture of Latin America, Middlesex 1970, 291.

25. P. Neruda and C. Vallejo, Selected Poems, edited by R. Bly, Boston 1971, 156-7.

A strong visionary element pervaded Chilean literature.

Chile had found a literary imagination; there remained political creativity. The Chilean Left sought its political thought from two currents: nationalism and socialism.

Nationalism in Chile was not the reaffirmation of an already existing national identity, as it was in Europe. Apart from the traditional Right, searching for its roots in a Hispanic and Catholic past, nationalism was a psychological, emotional attitude born out of the lack of such an identity and the process of defining one, and hence associated with the progressive elements in Chilean society. These included the Centre as well as the Left, so that nationalism was not confined to the Left alone.

The frustration resulting from economic stagnation focused on the theme of Chile's Second Independence. In the Wars of Liberation in the early nineteenth century,

> Latin America gained only political independence and national sovereignty, and was thwarted in its desire to create a way of life for its people that they could truly call their own... Independence was never a form of separation, which retained the same old agrarian and economic structures... It would seem that the area was denied the gift of political creativity.[26]

The radical leftist Carlos Altamirano wrote of, "our full national sovereignty, that had been snatched away from us".[27] For Salvador Allende, of the moderate Left,

> We speak of a Second Independence. The first was when we defeated colonialism and achieved political independence. Now we are struggling for our economic independence which

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26. Frei, 'The Second Latin American Revolution', 86-7.

27. see Altamirano, 'Critical Reflections on the Chilean Revolutionary Process' in Socialist Thought and Practice, 18, Sept. 1974, 81.

> will lead to full political independence, something which developing countries unfortunately do not enjoy.[28]

These statements reiterate certain assumptions. The essential conflict was seen in terms of dependence and independence, which were mutually exclusive. Chile had been deprived of true independence by outside forces, which resulted in a preoccupation with external participants in Chilean affairs. Furthermore, this sense of denial was characteristic of Latin America and of developing countries generally, creating a continental or global dimension in which the basic conflict was seen in larger than merely national terms. Political and economic factors were seen to be inseparable. Finally, there was the belief that national identity flowed from, and demanded as a prerequisite, real independence.

The main concern that these men expressed was economic nationalism. The Great Depression had impressed upon the Centre and Left the effects of foreign domination of the economy and the need to gain greater control over their country's economic resources. Economic nationalism introduced three ideas. The first was aimed at the integration of the economic enclaves that foreign companies had established, especially in the mining sector, into the national economy. Second was a deliberate process of industrialization, known as "import substitution". Both of these aims required the third, that of state-directed development, the practical basis of which was laid with the creation by the Popular Front government in 1938 of CORFO (Corporacion de Fomento), which began to invest in the economy

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28. S. Allende, 'The Chilean Road to Socialism' in J.A. Zammit (ed.), The Chilean Road to Socialism, Sussex 1973, 19.

and undertake economic planning.

But continued high inflation and insufficient growth convinced Chileans of the failure of orthodox economic policies and the need for more fundamental or systemic changes. Robert Ayres noted that,

> Chileans have responded more to the absolute as opposed to the comparative or relative nature of their economic and social condition. What appears increasingly salient is Chilean awareness of the untenable nature of the country's economic and social development in absolute terms, regardless, for example, of the fact that Chile might rate higher than Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, or Peru on almost all measures of such development.[29]

In 1958, economist Jorge Ahumada viewed the Chilean condition in terms recalling Samir Amin's "disarticulation": "The crisis is total, and it has its origins in the lack of harmony of the disjointed institutions, activities, and values of the nation".[30]

This altered awareness provoked structuralism, which emerged in the 1950's, arguing the need to change basic economic relationships. The structuralists sought to break up the various forms of monopolistic control of economic resources: foremost the agrarian latifundia system, both inefficient and intrinsically unjust, but also the concentration of corporations, banking, and income.[31] The approach was mainly inward-looking, concerned with internal economic relationships. It stressed that structural changes would have to be realised not only by state direction and

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29. R.L. Ayres, 'Economic Stagnation and the Emergence of the Political Ideology of Chilean Underdevelopment' in World Politics, Oct. 1972, 39 n. Ayres emphasizes the admixture of the economic and the political in this ideology.

30. quoted by E. Halperin, Nationalism and Communism in Chile, Cambridge 1965, 186.

31. see Ayres, 39-44.

planning but by a broadened concept of the state.

> Whatever the political shape that the new development model may take, it would appear indisputable that the state will have to assume the leading role in it... Politics aimed at bringing about these fundamental transformations will affect private interests and will demand new patterns of behaviour which are compatible with accelerated development. This will not be achieved simply by economic planning but will require a whole new philosophy of the functions of the state, and a thorough reorganization of the ways and means of government action.[32]

Thus, this post-war generation of economists also made an important humanistic contribution to development theory by viewing economic phenomena as part of a larger and evolving cultural whole. The structuralists accused the American Klein-Saks mission, which advised Ibáñez on economic policy in the mid-1930's, of failing to consider the human implications of tough stabilization measures and of offering only monetary palliatives rather than dealing with the structural causes of inflation. Similar criticisms were made with regard to the policy of the international monetary agencies of tying economic aid to domestic stabilization measures.[33]

Structuralist theorists, whose mentor was the Argentinian director of ECLA, Dr Raúl Prebisch, included Chilean economists Aníbal Pinto, Osvaldo Sunkel and Felipe Herrera. Through their leading positions in such organizations as ECLA, CEPAL, ILPES and the Inter-American Development Bank, they gave structuralism both influence at government level and intellectual respectability. Both the Christian Democrat and Popular Unity governments were

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32. O. Sunkel, 'Change and Frustration in Chile' in C. Veliz (ed.), Obstacles to Change in Latin America, London 1965, 143-4.

33. F.B. Pike, Chile and the United States, 1880-1962, Indiana 1963, 268, 275, 428-9 n. Pike had made an exhaustive study of Chilean writing up to 1962.

influenced by the structuralists, in ideology and through the employment of persons associated with these organizations.

The other face of economic nationalism was anti-imperalism, which in reality was virtually synonomous with anti-Americanism. Anti-imperialism remained mostly the preserve of the Left: the need to liberate Chile from foreign dominance had been a theme of the Left since the days of Recabarren. The Left concentrated on the inter-relationship between foreign interests and the local ruling elite groups, who combined to exploit both the natural resources and the workers of Chile. Gil wrote in 1966,

> The specific Communist position is that at present Chile is ruled by a native oligarchy allied to United States imperialism but that the country is now approaching a people's democratic revolution against these two enemies. The central task of the party is stated in consequence to be the formulation of a united front of all popular forces.[34]

Allende said to Régis Debray, "We Socialists have proclaimed that imperialism is our number one enemy, and therefore we gave and still give first priority to national liberation".[35] The Left placed itself in the tradition of President José Manuel Balmaceda (1886-91), who attempted to recover Chile's nitrate resources from British control and was defeated in the civil war of 1891. The Left interpreted Balmaceda as a visionary who committed suicide in solitude, having been defeated by the foreign companies and the Chilean oligarchy.[36]

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34. F.G. Gil, The Political System of Chile, Boston 1966, 279.

35. R. Debray, The Chilean Revolution, New York 1971, 69-70.

36. see S. Allende, Chile's Road to Socialism, Middlesex 1973, 14, 56; P. Neruda, Memoirs, Middlesex 1978, 348-9.

The dominance of foreign capital was a symbol of national decadence. Julio César Jobet, a noted Chilean economist with Marxist leanings, believed that Chilean underdevelopment, the result of her colonial ties with the industrialized nations, had provoked a disintegration of the existing national consciousness. "Economic and social backwardness has brought on great moral decadence."[37] The leftist Christian Democrat Radomiro Tomic wrote,

> National capitalism began to develop on the basis of exploitation of the working class, creating social tensions previously unknown in Chilean society. Foreign capital took over control of nitrates, then of copper and Chilean foreign trade. The economic customs revenues from nitrate and copper provided the ruling classes with such an easy life that the old austere, pioneering and enterprising spirit of the previous generation disappeared.[38]

The anti-imperialism of the Left was supported by the theory of economic dependence formulated by Prebisch. He observed that the notion of comparative advantage, an integral justification of economic liberalism, was simply not working in Latin America. The gap between the value of primary exports and industrial imports was increasing in favour of the developed industrial nations. His solutions were: first, the implementation of structuralist policies; second, increased import substitution; third, Latin American integration. The latter would provide for increased bargaining power in the face of the overwhelming economic dominance of the United States, as well as

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37. J.C. Jobet, 'Consequences of Imperialist Penetration in Chile' in L.E. Aguilar (ed.), Marxism in Latin America, New York 1968, 154.

38. R. Tomic, 'One View of Chile's Present Political and Economic Situation' in Zammit (ed.), 32.

creating broad markets as a prerequisite for industrialization.[39]

Prebisch's conclusion was that the historical processes which allowed the Western industrial nations to achieve economic development were not operating in the same way for the underdeveloped nations. Chilean economist Osvaldo Sunkel described the paradox that the Chilean economy had experienced both stagnation and change in the post-war period, and the resulting frustration:

> ...very rapid and intense change has taken place, but this has not produced certain expected social consequences, such as have resulted from the process of economic development in what are now advanced, industrialized countries.[40]

This awareness undermined Pan-Americanism, the existing basis of inter-American relations, by rejecting its central assumption, a commonality of interests between the United States and Latin America. The Left believed that any such commonality had been imposed on them by "the monster of the North".[41] The overthrow of Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954, the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1961, and the invasion of the Dominican Republic by U.S. marines in 1965 all lent credence to the belief that Pan-Americanism was a unilateral action to further U.S. interests in Latin America.

Pan-Americanism was also rejected on a cultural plane.

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39. see F. Herrera, 'Economic Integration and Political Reintegration' in M. Adams (ed.), Latin America: Evolution or Explosion, New York 1963, 92-104, for a Chilean argument in favour of Latin American integration.

40. Sunkel, 'Change and Frustration in Chile', 116.

41. the phrase by which the Cuban nationalist José Marti described the United States; see also Ruben Dario's famous 'Ode to Roosevelt' describing the fundamental contradiction between America's "manifest destiny" and Latin American interests.

To the Chilean Left, economic dependence resulted in cultural "denationalization": the absorption of local cultures into the American Way of Life. The poet Enrique Lihn wrote in 'The Defeat':

> To be chosen by a chosen people
> is not a task that can be accomplished exclusively
> on the level of human forces.
> Absolute correctness in the addition of myths, such is
> the way of truth, the American Way,
> crossed by the Divines and the Saints
> and those who sewed with their bones the time
> of the limitless drama of expansion.[42]

The theme of cultural dependence lay behind the association of indigenous art movements with leftist political orientations. The New Chilean Song Movement, which emerged in the 1960's and included Isabel Parra, Victor Jara, and the groups Inti-illimani and Quilapayun, fused social themes with native folk music. The new wave cinema, which gained impetus with the election of Allende, was explicitly revolutionary, recreating and re-interpreting Chile's past in a series of committed, passionate and lyrical films. An example was Miguel Littin's 'The Promised Land' (1973), based historically on a peasant revolt at the time of the 1932 Socialist Republic, but seeking to deepen the contemporary socialist transformation by showing how ordinary men became revolutionaries.

Creative writers expressed the same theme of debasement. Chile's foremost novelist, José Donoso, portrayed in novels such as Coronation (1957) and The Obscene Bird of Night (1969) an aging decadent upper class whose sterility of values contrasted with the vigour of the lower classes. Neruda concluded in his poem 'They

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42. E. Lihn, 'The Defeat' in E. Rodriquez Monegal (ed.), The Borzoi Anthology of Latin American Literature, II, New York 1977, 838.

Receive Instructions Against Chile':

> In this way they decide from above, from the roll of dollars,
> in this way the dwarf traitor receives his instructions,
> and the generals act as the police force,
> and the trunk of the tree of the country rots.[43]

But there was an ambivalence in the Chilean Left's attitude towards the United States. They shared a feeling of identity, of being part of the New World; ironically, the most violently anti-American, the New Left, displayed the same combination of visionary idealism and morality that was an essential element of the puritan legacy in America. Octavio Paz wrote of the mixture of fascination and horror, love and envy which the Third World felt, wanting "to be both like the 'developed nations' and unlike them. The Third World has no idea of what it is above and beyond a will to being." Unlike the primordial opposition between East and West, the North-South duality in the Americas was like alternating currents within the one body: the North embodying the Reformation and the South the Counter-Reformation. The Third World sought to identify itself in antithesis to the West, becoming "the other by definition, its caricature and its conscience".[44] (original emphasis) Anti-Yankeeism was also often a means by which Chileans could avoid their own responsibility for the Chilean condition, by blaming all problems on an external cause.

Another nationalist concern was to create a genuine identity that grew out of Chilean realities. There was frequent criticism of the importation of foreign ideological formulas. Any political

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43. Neruda and Vallejo, 129.

44. O. Paz, Alternating Current, London 1974, 194, 193.

party with international alignments came in for such criticism, notably the Communists, but also the Christian Democrats. The non-Communist Left held to the notion of a Third Way, between the excessive materialism and dehumanizing nature of capitalism and the state oppression of Communism.

In the international sphere the Third Way concept was an attempt to find a way out of the Cold War rigidity of the post-war period. While the non-Communist Left was suspicious of the PC's links with the Soviet Union, it saw the U.S. anti-Communist crusade as a form of imperialism. In international relations the Left advocated an independent, nonaligned foreign policy, one not bound by the strategic considerations imposed upon them by the United States. By advocating such a foreign policy in 1964, the Christian Democrats deprived the leftist parties of one of their most important platforms, although in office the PDC remained committed to the West and to inter-American solutions.

Socialism was the second major theme in the ideology of the Left. It is as well to be aware of Frei's warning:

> Is it possible that the Latin America which today speaks of socialism with the same voice that once proclaimed freedom uses the term as a cover for a multitude of confused and contradictory illusions?[45]

Before the 1960's, the self-proclaimed socialism of the Radical and Democrat parties had done more to create an image in Chile of what socialism stood for than had the Marxist socialist.[46]

The first source of Chilean socialism was the perceived

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45. Frei, 'The Second Latin American Revolution', 93.

46. Pike, 263.

need to humanize the economy. However this was the concern of more than simply those advocating socialism. Eduardo Frei wrote,

> I dream of a synthesis of justice and freedom in an economy that is based entirely on man's ability, not on inherited factors of money, class or race. In Latin America it is man that must be made great.[47]

Allende, in his first presidential message to Congress, stated:

> our task is to define and put into practice, as Chile's road to socialism, a new model for the state, a different economic system and a new pattern of society which concentrates on man, on his needs and his hopes.[48]

The difference was qualitative: whereas Frei believed that it was possible to humanize the existing system, Allende believed that the system itself was at fault. Thus, socialism represented the need to change the entire system. As Allende explained:

> No government has been capable of solving these essential problems of the people. And this is not just happening in Chile, it is all over Latin America, and there have been democratic governments, pesudo-democratic governments, and dictatorships. So one has to come to a very obvious conclusion: it is the method, it is the system.[49]

The historical processes in the United States and in Chile had produced different conceptions of capitalism. Capitalism might not have created a spiritual dimension in the United States, but it was at least successful, which bred its own ethos. In Chile, capitalism was seen to be both unsuccessful and morally debasing.

In 1955, Feliú Cruz, a respected non-Marxist historian, observed that most notable Chilean scholars who had developed in the preceding thirty years had been strongly influenced by Marxist

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47. Frei, 'Paternalism, Pluralism, etc.', 40.

48. Allende, Chile's Road to Socialism, 144.

49. S. Landau, 'An Interview with Allende' in Nacla, 18.

ideology and had concluded that classical capitalism and democracy had outlived their usefulness. Coinciding in the early 1950's was a new trend in Chilean historiography whereby the country's past was interpreted in accordance with theories of materialistic determination and class conflict.[50] In Chilean poetry this trend was expressed in Neruda's Canto General (1950). The fundamental purpose of this epic Latin American poem was to rewrite the continent's history from the perspective of the working class in order to correct the distorted official history. Thus, for example, it was not the American company Anaconda but individual Chilean miners who built the huge copper mine Chuquicamata. The Chilean novel was also characterized by a strong awareness of class relationships.[51]

Marxist socialism, represented by the long traditions of the Communist and Socialist parties and by this intellectual movement, and deriving from the secular tradition in Chile, was the mainstream of Chilean socialism. Christian socialism emerged in the left-wing of the PDC in the late 1960's and was represented in the subsequent defections from that party to MAPU in 1969 and the Left Christians in 1971. The Christian - secular distinction was very important in Chilean politics, capable of creating intense enmity between parties that were natural allies in a class sense: the Conservatives and Liberals in the nineteenth century, and the Christian Democrats and Radicals in the 1960's. While MAPU became counted among the revolutionary Left, the split in that party and the unwillingness of the Left Christians to join the UP coalition

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50. Pike, 265.

51. Franco, 291.

indicated an undercurrent of suspicion of the predominant Marxism.

A second source of socialism was social concern over the poverty that existed for a large proportion of Chileans. One must distinguish between "underdevelopment" and "poverty", the latter not synonomous with the former but largely a consequence of it. Poverty could be measured by partial indices (health, nutrition, housing, illiteracy, mortality, etc.) or by a synthetic index (average income per capita).

Chile's per capita income, as calculated by ECLA for the 1965-69 average, was $645. This was quite respectable for Latin America, where only Argentina and Uruguay had higher average income levels.[52] More to the point, however, was income distribution (see table 2).

Table 2. Income distribution in Chile in 1968: estimates[53]

Income group	% of income-earning population	% of personal income	Approx. income (per capita)
Lower	71.5	26.0	U.S.$ 220
Middle	24.1	28.5	710
Higher	4.4	45.5	6,200

These figures indicate the very low standard of living of the majority of Chileans, the wealth of a small high income group, and the relatively large middle sector, whose standard of living was precariously above that of the lower income group. Psychologically, the failure of wages to keep up with inflation threatened

52. ECLA, Economic Bulletin for Latin America, XVII, 2, 1972, New York 1973, 30-1.

53. De Vylder, 7, table 1.1.

the middle sector particularly.

Partial indices further described widespread poverty in Chile. Infant mortality was at an alarming, if declining, rate, while malnutrition remained the most serious health problem. Low-income families also faced a growing housing shortage and inadequate sanitary facilities. Illiteracy was still a problem, despite a considerable expansion of educational facilities under the Alessandri and Frei governments. It was estimated that one-third of the economically active population was unemployed or marginally employed. There was not only a striking gap between the living standards of high and low income groups, but also an urban-rural dichotomy.[54]

Creative writers responded to Chile's socio-economic problems by adopting the role of their country's conscience and by expressing a feeling for the collective as well as the individual. Chile had a noted tradition of committed poets: Mistral, Neruda, Nicanor Parra, Enrique Lihn. Novelists also concentrated on social themes, with a pervading sympathy for the poor and oppressed: "The Chilean novel never strays far from society".[55] Jean Franco concludes in her study of Latin American culture:

> While so much of Western art is concerned with individual experience or relations between the sexes, most of the major works of Latin-American literature and even some of its paintings are much more concerned with social phenomena and social ideals... and it is here that Latin American art

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54. for figures for these partial indices, see Ayres, 37-8; De Vylder, 7-9; ECLA, Economic Bulletin for Latin America, 1972, 30-1.

55. Franco, 291.

> achieves its profoundest vision - with that form of love which the Greeks called agape or love for one's fellow men... Here lies the true originality of Latin-American art: it has kept alive the vision of a more just and humane form of society and it continues to emphasize those emotions and relationships which are wider than the purely personal.[56]

A third source of socialism was a perceived "stalemate" in the existing political system, resulting in the inability of successive governments to resolve basic socio-economic problems. Robert Ayres defined the "stalemate" as "a situation in which no single political or social force has been able to impose its direction on the state apparatus, or to impose policy directives in accordance with a coherent ideology".[57]

Chilean administrations since 1925 were characterized by a cyclic boom-bust pattern. Governments often presented a leftist orientation and then slid inexorably to the right once in power. Ambitious electoral programmes faded away; efforts at a populist approach alternated with a return to authoritarian government, often accompanied by increasing repression. Neruda wrote of his "ungrateful" republic, "Its Presidents were acclaimed in the first month and martyred, justly or not, for the remainder of the five years and eleven months of the tenure".[58]

The pluralism of the Chilean body politic meant that no president had enjoyed an absolute majority in Congress. Therefore the "rules of the game" dominated: the basic premises of representation, compromise and consensus.[59]

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56. Ibid., 311.
57. Ayres, 50.
58. Neruda, Memoirs, 337.
59. Von Lazar and Quiros Varela, 53.

> The inter-play between highly competitive politics and the demands of numerous public and private institutions and groups resulted in a bargaining system which could be called the 'politics of conciliation'. Its main characteristic was that change could only be incremental, not radical.[60]

Stronger critics described "immobilism" as the main feature of the political system. Recent elections were characterized by their "noncriticality", that is, of not producing a durable realignment of party loyalties on behalf of change or innovation.[61]

The implication of the stalemate situation was the need for a breakthrough, often described in terms of the replacement of "formal" democracy by "effective" democracy. An implication in another direction was anti-parliamentarianism and the acceptance of more authoritarian solutions. This was a belief of many Socialists, such as Clodomiro Almeyda.

> Democratic liberalism... which in advanced capitalist countries permits the development of the people's movement, in the dependent countries only serves to anarchize society and to facilitate the rule of the reactionary minorities under cover of a semblance of public liberties that does not reach the masses and that they are unable to use.[62]

But, as one Chilean intellectual noted, the stalemate theme was itself a result of the conflict of ideology and politics.

> There has been a sharp discongruity between an ideology of master planning and the incrementalist bargaining system. This incongruity has probably contributed to the pervasive feeling of permanent crisis in Chilean politics.[63]

In the late 1960's the Left's ideology centred on "dependency

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60. A. Valenzuela, 'Political Constraints to the Establishment of Socialism in Chile' in Valenzuela (eds.), 23.

61. see R.L. Ayres, 'Unidad Popular and the Chilean Electoral Process' in Valenzuela (eds.), 30-66.

62. quoted by Halperin, 162.

63. A. Valenzuela, 25.

theory", a neo-Marxist variant of Lenin's 'Imperialism: the highest form of capitalism', stressing national liberation and socialist revolution. Dependency theory was a loose definition which, like Guevara's guerilla theory, held its coherence and purity only briefly. It developed from two main currents. The first was the convergence of a variety of interrelated ideas: the ECLA dependency theory of Prebisch, the growing post-war Third World identification, and the more recently emerging resource ideology, which observed that the vast bulk of non-renewable resources traded internationally moved from the developing to the developed world.[64]

The second was the political conflict of the sixties in Latin America. Dependency theory exhibited the uncompromising spirit that emanated from the Cuban Revolution, of which it could be seen ex post facto justification, in particular the unyielding anti-Yankeeism that liberals like Frei characterized as "strategic hatred".[65] The catalyst of the theory was the frustration resulting from the experience of democratic reformism. To the Chilean Left, Frei's "assertive nationalism" had in fact meant the continuing "denationalization" of Chile: specifically, increasing economic dependence; and in the wider sense, American penetration of all facets of Chilean life. As Osvaldo Sunkel explained, "One of the objectives of an ideal development policy seems to be, on the contrary, the affirmation of the national personality".[66] In retrospect, dependency theory was most

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64. see P. Connelly and R. Perlman, The Politics of Scarcity: Resource Conflict in International Relations, London 1975.

65. Frei contrasted this "strategic hatred" with his own approach of "assertive nationalism", see Halperin, 5-8.

66. Sunkel, 'National Development Policy, etc.', 25.

convincing as a critique of orthodox liberal models of development.

In 1968 the economist André Gunder Frank analysed Chile's underdevelopment in a renowned study of the mechanism of economic dependence. He argued that underdevelopment in Chile was "not an original or traditional state of affairs; nor... a historical stage of economic growth which the now developed capitalist countries passed through" but "the necessary product of four centuries of capitalist development and of the internal contradictions of capitalism itself".[67] Traditional economic liberalism had served to produce "periphery" underdevelopment in order to attain the development of the "metropolis". Development/underdevelopment became the modern equivalent of the original Marxist contradiction between capital and labour, incorporating the notion of the international division of labour.

Frank preserved the theme of the continuity of economic dependence from the colonial period through independence to contemporary Chile. But his historical analysis offered two implications which differed from those of traditional Marxist ideology. The first concerned the attitude of the Left to the middle class. Traditional Marxists believed that Chile had a feudal past, which was reflected in contemporary society. Therefore they viewed the revolutionary process in two stages: a national democratic revolution, then the socialist revolution. Frank argued that Chile had evolved out of the world capitalist system as a "dependent capitalist society".

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67. Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America, 3. Dependency theory originated among radicals connected with the North American Marxist magazine, Monthly Review, in which Frank's theses were first published. Almost unknown in the United States, the Spanish edition of Monthly Review, published in Buenos Aires and Santiago, was widely read and influential among leftist Chilean intellectuals.

Hence, the workers and peasants should reject any alliance with the bourgeosie, since the phase theoretically requiring broad alliances never in fact existed. The Chilean MIR believed that,

> The Latin American bourgeosie, unlike those of Europe and North America, did not develop through its own efforts, but basically as the illegitimate daughter of foreign capital. This relationship of dependence has not only been maintained but strengthened in the last decades.[68] (my emphasis)

The wave of economic nationalism in Latin America was seen as a secondary contradiction between the interests of imperialism and the national bourgeosie.[69]

The second implication was a complete break with the international capitalist system, since as long as Chile remained within that system its dependency would increase. Ultimately, this suggested autarchic development, perhaps also a response to the isolation Cuba was enduring. The new dependency theory brought a change of mood equivalent to that of the Cuban Revolution: the shift from a relative to an absolute perspective, a revolutionary fervour, a strong moral element and sense of urgency. The interests of the developed and the underdeveloped nations were now seen to be in essential conflict. The dominance of foreign capital was no longer a symptom of Chilean decadence but the root cause of it. According to Pedro Vuskovic, Allende's first economic minister,

> The stagnation, inflation, inequality, unemployment and denationalization of the economy, existing in extreme and increasing degree, were the inevitable outcome of

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68. MIR, 'The Implications of the Electoral Result for the Revolutionary Left' in R. Debray, Conversations with Allende, London 1971, 164.

69. Ibid., 164-5.

> the kind of subordinate capitalist development that characterized the Chilean economy and society. The state itself with its tradition of involvement in the economy of the country, was no more than an associate in the process of monopolization and dependence intrinsic to that system.[70] (my emphasis)

Frank's own conclusion was recognizably Castroite in tone. "The Latin American intellectual and Marxist will have to decide if he will remain inside pursuing reformism, or outside with the people making the revolution".[71] But as the Marxist parties' leadership of the Revolution was less threatened by dependency theory than by Castroite political theory, they were able to adopt it more easily.

While dependency theory was a penetrating challenge to traditional development models and was psychologically gratifying, it left undefined the alternative to dependence. Furthermore, in at least two respects it was unrealistic. Its black-and-white vision would be difficult to implement and, by concentrating solely on the external relationship of dependence, it tended to underestimate the importance of internal class relationships. With Popular Unity's commitment to a democratic road to socialism, it was in the implementation of its ideology that the Left would face some harsh realities and that it would have to find both political imagination and intellectual restraint.

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70. quoted by Nacla, 82.

71. A.G. Frank, 'Latin America: Capitalist Underdevelopment or Socialist Revolution?' in S.A. Halper and J.R. Sterling (eds.), Latin America: The Dynamics of Social Change, London 1972, 154.

CHAPTER IV

THE POPULAR UNITY INITIATIVE

The strategy of the Allende government in its first year in office was determined by two factors: the heterogeneous nature of Popular Unity and its minority status. In Congress in late 1970 UP had 20 senators out of 50, and 60 deputies out of 150 in the Chamber of Deputies. These factors determined above all that the transition to socialism would be gradual if Allende was to stay within the Constitution as he had pledged. The objective of Popular Unity might be "total scientific Marxist socialism"[1], but it remained a future goal, not an immediate reality. The victory of Popular Unity initiated a revolutionary process, not a Revolution. That moment of transcendence had yet to come.

The nature of Popular Unity required that it undertake simultaneously the structural changes it had promised and a short-term policy to reactivate the depressed Chilean economy. The short-term economic policy of the government was motivated not only by economic and social considerations, reactivation of the economy and a more egalitarian distribution of income, but also by the political considerations of gaining popular support to increase representation in Congress. In the struggle for power, the UP government had to prove itself able to deliver material improvement to the Chilean people. Joán Garcés, one of Allende's advisers, wrote,

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1. R. Debray, The Chilean Revolution, New York 1971, 118.

> The political power of the Popular Government is indissolubly linked with its short-term economic success... The road followed by the Chilean government requires economic effectiveness as a sine qua non.[2]

Pedro Vuskovic, minister of economic affairs and an independent Marxist, explicitly recognized the political priority.

> When the main fields of concern and the economic priorities are established, certain basic political requirements emerge. In other words, economic policy is subordinate, in its content, shape and form, to the political need of increasing the Popular Unity's support.[3]

The attention of the political parties was focused on the municipal elections in April 1971. Compared with Frei in 1965, Allende was at a disadvantage since congressional elections did not fall due in the honeymoon period after the presidential election, with Congress remaining untouched until March 1973. Allende would gain little real power from a marked victory in the municipal elections. They were, however, designated as a plebiscite on the government's first five months in office. If Popular Unity received a clear majority, then Allende could use his executive power to call a referendum on proposed institutional changes to consolidate the revolutionary process. In particular, this meant the replacement of the bicameral Chilean Congress by a unicameral People's Assembly.

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2. J. Garcés, 'Chile 1971: A Revolutionary Government within a Welfare State' in K. Medhurst (ed.), Allende's Chile, London 1972, 44.

3. P. Vuskovic, 'The Economic Policy of the Popular Unity Government in J.A. Zammit (ed.), The Chilean Road to Socialism, Sussex 1973, 50; see also P. Vuskovic, 'Chile: Toward the Building of Socialism' in D.L. Johnson (ed.), The Chilean Road to Socialism, Garden City 1973, 416-27.

UP's short-term economic policy was a combination of Keynesian state-sponsored expansion and redistribution of income. "Given the existing political conditions, only income redistribution can provide the necessary impetus to mobilize and redirect the economy", wrote one government official.[4] Real wages were increased significantly, in favour of wage and salary earners, while there were strict price controls. Thus, to retain his absolute level of profits, the manufacturer was required to increase production. The government's policy was a mixture of incentive and coercion: the manufacturer was given a greater internal market by the increases in the real wages of the people, but if he did not increase production, wage increases and price controls were liable to lead him to bankruptcy. The government was counting on the utilization of idle industrial capacity, estimated at up to 30 per cent, and full employment to increase production.

The policy of government spending and deficit financing was successful in creating a mini-boom in the economy. The gross domestic product rose 8.5 per cent in 1971, including spectacular rises of over 12 per cent in the industry and construction sectors, in which over 70,000 housing units were begun. While the share of wage-earners in total national income moved from 53 per cent in 1970 to 58 per cent in 1971, consumer prices rose only 21 per cent between December 1970 and December 1971, compared with the 35 per cent increase in 1970. Unemployment was reduced by half by the end of 1971.[5]

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4. J. Ibarra, 'Some Aspects of the Popular Unity Government's Development Model' in Zammit (ed.), 60.

5. figures from ECLA, Economics Survey of Latin America, 1971, New York 1973, 107-13.

This boom, and the other popular measures the government fulfilled, including free milk to schoolchildren and "health trains" to the south of Chile, took effect in a dramatic increase of support for the Popular Unity coalition in the municipal elections. There was also the absence of the totalitarian repression that the Right had predicted. In the election UP candidates received 49.7 per cent of the vote, almost 14 per cent up on Allende's presidential vote, and the opposition parties took 48 per cent. Notably, Allende's own Socialist party increased its vote to 22.3 per cent from 12 per cent in the 1969 congressional elections, indicating the strong personalism in Chilean politics. By discounting invalid and blank votes, pro-government newspapers claimed an absolute victory of 50.86 per cent.[6] But this concern with minute percentage differences, in elections that were largely symbolic, suggested that far from being resolved, the question of power had become even more undecided. Nor was UP's margin of victory substantial enough to encourage Allende to call a referendum.

The results also indicated subtle shifts in the balance of forces within Popular Unity. The substantial rise in the PS vote meant that the PC, which increased its vote slightly to 16.9 per cent, was no longer the biggest party within the coalition. The disappearance of the UP committees after the 1970 election also diminished Communist predominance. But together the two Marxist parties accounted for almost 40 per cent of the vote, increasing the Marxist and proletarian sectors in UP. This

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6. P.E. Sigmund, The Overthrow of Allende, Pittsburgh 1977, 142-3.

coincided with a weakening in the non-Marxist middle-class influence. The Radicals, partly affected by a scandal in the copper administration involving a Radical minister, dropped from 13 per cent in 1969 to 8.1 per cent in 1971.[7]

With Allende committed to constitutional means, the re-emergence of leftist groups both within and outside UP posed for him a major political problem both in terms of unity among the Left and of relations with the opposition.

At the PS national congress in January 1971 Carlos Altamirano, leader of the left-wing and renowed for his fiery revolutionary speeches, replaced the more traditional Aniceto Rodríguez as secretary-general. Allende's support of Altamirano was subsequently used by the opposition to argue that Allende really believed in violent rather than democratic means. But this purely ideological explanation ignored more realistic political explanations: Allende's attempt to co-opt and neutralize the radical elements of the PS, and his intense personal rivalry with Aniceto Rodríguez.[8] At a news conference in February he said confidently:

> We have said that the transformation and the changes are going to be within the bourgeois democracy. And if Comrade Altamirano thinks we should go faster, I will tell him why we are not going to go faster.[9]

The response of the underground MIR, having reappraised its strategy of armed revolution following the 1970 electoral

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7. Economist, 10 April, 1971, 40-1.

8. see A. and J.S. Valenzuela, 'Visions of Chile' in Latin American Research Review, Fall 1975, 164-5.

9. L.A. Sobel (ed.), Chile and Allende, New York 1974, 41-2.

victory, made Allende's position doubly difficult. The organization chose not to join the UP coalition but to maintain its "clandestine, compartamentalized, politico-military structure" for as long as the capitalist system existed in Chile, thus keeping its freedom of action.[10] MIRistas organized and led many of the illegal seizures (tomas) of farms, factories and housing estates, in line with their self-appointed "radicalizing role".[11] But the MIR declared support for the government, thereby giving the opposition the means to hold the Allende government accountable for the illegal activities of the MIRistas.

The two major Centre groups in the government coalition were also affected by the question of radicalization. Both MAPU and the Radical party were split in 1971 over whether they should define themselves in social democratic or Marxist terms. The new secretary-general of MAPU, Rodrigo Ambrosio, led the movement in an increasingly Marxist orientation.[12] The more prominent members, including Minister of Agriculture Jacques Chonchol, left to join the newly-formed Christian Left party.

Similarly, at its Convention in August 1971 the Radical party adopted a Declaration of PrInciples accepting the Marxist concepts of historical materialism and the class struggle. Five

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10. MIR, 'The Implications of the Electoral Result for the Revolutionary Left' in R. Debray, Conversations with Allende, London 1971, 189-190.

11. Sergio Zorrilla, quoted by J. Huasi, 'Blow after Blow' in Johnson (ed.), 197; see also 'MIR - The Underground Surfaces' in Nacla, New Chile, New York 1973, 30-3.

12. see MAPU, 'Analysis of the Clàsses in Chilean Society' in Johnson (ed.), 207-38.

of the seven Radical senators and seven out of 19 deputies left the party in protest, forming the party of the Radical Left (PIR) which declared its support for Allende. Alejandro Rios Valdivia, Allende's minister of defence, pointed out that the Radical party had never been Marxist, nor a party of the workers, but had aimed at attracting the middle sectors to Popular Unity. Allende agreed that the Radicals were trying to change their own distinctive ideology to become something they were not.[13]

These political realignments corresponded with a realignment within the major Centre party outside Popular Unity, the Christian Democrat party. After Allende's election, the Christian Democrats were faced with whether to follow a policy of support for Allende or one of "constructive opposition", the alternatives reflecting the personal, ideological and political differences between Tomic and Frei. The PDC national assembly in December 1970 avoided a confrontation by a compromise, electing as chairman Senator Irureta, who announced that the Christian Democrats would support "positive" Allende proposals but show "inflexible" opposition to proposals which jeopardized fundamental values. The party rejected an offer from the National party to form a "civic front" in opposition to Popular Unity.[14]

Several offers by the left-wing Christian Democrats to the UP coalition for collaboration, including an offer to run joint mayoral candidates in the municipal elections, were rejected by the UP central committee, despite Allende's own willingness to accept.

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13. see 'Radicalism is not and cannot be Marxist' in Johnson (ed.), 181-2, for Rios Valdivia's position; S. Allende, 'Radicalism and Bourgeois Sectors' in Johnson (ed.), 285-9.

14. see Sigmund, 134-6.

Meanwhile, the position of the right-wing group around Frei was becoming increasingly hard-line towards the government, as a result of alleged government pressure on Christian Democrats in the civil service, and particularly because of personal attacks on Frei in pro-government newspapers.

Christian Democrat attitudes toward the government hardened considerably with the assassination on June 8 of Frei's former minister and close friend, Edmundo Pérez Zujovic, by the extreme left Organized Vanguard of the People. Pérez was a leading right-wing Christian Democrat who had been associated by the Left with the increasing repression by the Christian Democrat administration. Allende immediately placed Santiago province under a "state of emergency", and denounced the murder as a "deliberate provocation intended to alter the institutional life of the country", while police tracked down and in a gun battle killed two suspects, brothers Roland and Arturo Rivera. Christian Democrat leaders claimed Pérez's death was the result of a "climate of hate, defamation and of violence" which the government was sponsoring with its toleration of extremist groups.[15]

A resolution of the ambivalent PDC policy was initiated by a by-election in Valparaiso in July when the opposition parties co-operated informally to present a single candidate. Christian Democrat Dr. Oscar Marin was elected with just over 50 per cent, while the Socialist candidate, Hernán del Canto, received 48 per cent of the vote.

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15. Sobel (ed.), 42-3.

The election led the leader of the former tercerista faction in the PDC, Bosco Parra, to introduce a resolution prohibiting collaboration between the Christian Democrats and the National party. When it was defeated, Parra, two youth leaders and six congressmen left the PDC to form the Christian Left, which aligned with Popular Unity. Significantly the defection did not include Radomiro Tomic, suggesting that his loyalty to the Christian Democrat party was stronger than his leftist inclination. He criticized the government for rejecting Christian Democrat offers for closer co-operation.[16]

The realignments in 1971 among the political parties were towards polarization into a government/opposition dichotomy. The changes meant that Allende's coalition was larger, but less coherent and organised, since neither the Christian Left nor the PIR had formally joined the coalition. Their conditional backing indicated that they believed in socialism, but that they were not prepared for the transformation of Chile into a straight Marxist society.[17] Moreover it remained to be seen how much electoral support the Christian Democrat defection brought to Allende, although in the 1969 precedent of MAPU the PDC had retained most of its votes.

On the other hand, the Christian Democrat party was left a more coherent party and more committed to opposition. In September it ended its working compact with the UP government.

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16. R. Tomic, 'One View of Chile's Present Political and Economic Situation' in Zammit (ed.), 37-40.

17. Economist, 21 Aug., 1971, 36-7; Sigmund, 149-52.

Between the Marxist Left and the Christian Democrats there existed fundamentally different interpretations of law and legitimacy. The Christian Democrats saw Chilean law in an abstract sense, as something sacrosanct. They chose to make institutional legitimacy as their value, represented by the Statute of Democratic Guarantees.

The Chilean Left claimed a revolutionary as well as institutional legitimacy. In his speeches Allende often referred to the moral authority he exercised as leader of a popular revolutionary movement.[18] The Marxists viewed Chilean law in a relative, historical sense, as expressed by Allende's legal advisor, Eduardo Novoa,

> Like all legal systems the world over, the Chilean one is simply the expression of a particular historical form of social life and organization... the legal system is neither inert nor neutral.[19]

Allende criticized the "class bias" of the Chilean judiciary when the Supreme Court refused to lift the parliamentary immunity of Senator Raúl Morales, wanted by a military prosecuter for involvement in the Schneider assassination.[20]

This difference in interpretation was the basis of conflict regarding Allende's nationalization programme, particularly over the means employed by the government. Nationalization played a crucial role in UP's plans for the construction of socialism. The Popular Unity programme defined in the new economy the existence of

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18. S. Allende, Chile's Road to Socialism, Middlesex 1973, passim.
19. E. Novoa, 'The Constitutional and Legal Aspects of the Popular Unity Government's Policy' in Zammit (ed.), 28.
20. Debray, The Chilean Revolution, 97-8.

three sectors - public, mixed, and private - corresponding to the pluralist nature of the government coalition. There was nothing new in a mixed economy; what was new was the intention to make the public sector predominant to enable effective economic planning.[21]

Because, with the exception of copper, the opposition-controlled Congress would not legislate the nationalization of industries, Allende had to resort to existing legislation. On the advice of Novoa, and with AlLende's own long experience of working within the institutional system, he intended to use a variety of means acquired by the executive over the years enabling him to intervene in the economy. These mechanisms, which gave the president considerable, if finite, flexibility of action, had come into being because of the perceived inadequacies of the Chilean industrial bourgeoisie at the time of the Great Depression. At that time they were designed to aid the private sector, now they were to be used to counter-purpose, to supplant the bourgeoisie and establish a dominant state sector.

One such mechanism, passed in 1932 under President Carlos Davila's administration, allowed the government to send officials ("interveners") to oversee production should a private company operate below capacity, or temporarily to requisition a company producing goods "of basic necessity" should for some reason production cease. Under these laws the UP government intervened in a variety of companies: textiles, machinery, coal, brass and

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21. see 'The Programme of Unidad Popular' in Allende, 37-9.

cement. Workers' seizure of plants was one rationale for stepping in; in this way the government gained control of the Ford Motor Corporation, and fourteen textile mills seized simultaneously by workers in May 1971.[22]

The Government also used CORFO, previously the main state organism for sponsoring the private sector. On the grounds of the nationalization of vital industries and the recovery of basic resources, CORFO either bought out or bought controlling stock in Chile's largest steel, iron, liquid gas and nitrate producers, as well as the ITT Chilean subsidiary and the General Motors truck plant.

State purchase was also used to nationalize the banking system, one of UP's priority sectors in their attack on monopoly capitalism. The state-owned Central Bank proceeded to buy stock in the twenty-two private Chilean banks; by September 1971 it controlled nineteen of them, including the large foreign-owned banks, the Bank of London and South America, the Bank of America and the First National City Bank.[23]

For the government the means employed to carry out its programme were not a matter of principle, but a pragmatic choice of one or another possibility allowed by the law, depending on the circumstances. But its resort to these "legal loopholes" antagonized the opposition, who felt that Popular Unity was acting

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22. see Nacla, 24-5, for details of the major interventions and nationalizations in Allende's first year; 'The Government and the Workers take Control of Ford Motor Company'in Johnson (ed.), 134-6.

23. see Banco Central de Chile, 'Banking Policy' in Johnson (ed.), 428-32.

outside the spirit, if not the letter, of the Constitution. Two things upset them: the use of measures initially intended to be temporary to bring about permanent state control of industries, and that by means of these executive powers Allende was nationalizing large sectors of the economy without recourse to Congress.

Opposition frustration focused on the intended state purchase of the paper industry, a sensitive area because it was a potential backdoor to government control of the newsprint media, and because the major private company, the Paper and Carton Manufacturing Company, was headed by Jorge Alessandri, thus bringing the charge that the intended take-over was a political action. With CIA financing, a group of private stockholders was able to resist nationalization. For similar reasons there was concern at the takeover of the biggest Chilean publishing house, Zig-Zag, on the verge of bankruptcy because of the government policy of raising wages and freezing prices. Zig-Zag published the weekly Ercilla, which had a Christian Democrat orientation. Although the magazine remained independent editorially under government control, political interference in the news media became a major and continuing opposition theme.[24]

The countryside was the area of reform most removed from the centre of national politics. Geographically, agrarian reform operated most intensely in the deep south of Chile, a long way from the arena of political struggle in Santiago. The revolutionary process in the countryside was much more a private conflict between

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24. see Sigmund, 142, 157.

landowners and peasants, where the presence of the political parties as intermediaries was least apparent. Correspondingly, it was where Popular Unity leadership and strategy in the revolutionary process was most seriously challenged by other leftist groups, notably those following the Castroite theory of rural-based revolution.

Yet paradoxically, the UP agrarian programme saw the greatest continuities between the Allende government and the previous Christian Democrat administration. As with its socialization programme in other areas, the Popular Unity government made use of existing legislation. Although less than 30 per cent of the national population was rural, agrarian reform had become a major political issue in the 1960's, jointly inspired by the Cuban Revolution and the Alliance for Progress. In fact there were two issues: the question of social justice and the question of productivity. The first concerned the concentration of land ownership and the living and work conditions of the campesinos; the second, the increasing amounts of food Chile needed to import to feed its own population. The problem was to reconcile these two issues; the danger for the Left was in simply assuming that they were compatible.

In 1962 Alessandri has enacted Chile's first Agrarian Reform Law, a point he stressed in his 1970 campaign.[25] But by concentrating on the distinction of only neglected land, his reform in fact

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25. on agrarian reform in Chile before Allende, see A. Jefferies, 'Agrarian Reform in Chile' in Geography, July 1971, 221-30; R.R. Kaufman, The Politics of Land Reform in Chile, 1950-1970, Cambridge 1972.

protected the latifundistas' interests: it answered criticism that the land was not being exploited, while creating a small group of land-owning peasants who were jealous of their improved fortune and fearful of losing it. Nevertheless, Alessandri's reform was important in two respects for Popular Unity later. Firstly, a 1963 constitutional amendment allowed payments for expropriated land to be deferred in the form of long-term loans, with cash payments of 1-10 per cent, thus making large-scale expropriation economically viable. Secondly, it established institutions capable of real agrarian reform: CORA (Corporation of Agrarian Reform) and INDAP (the Institute of Agricultural Development).

The legal basis for genuine land reform was established with Frei's reform law, finally enacted in July 1967. This law defined a maximum limit of land ownership of 80 hectares, in practice depending on the nature of the land, and sought for the first time to incorporate the rural population into the social and cultural life of Chile. Peasants were encouraged to join unions and up to 100,000 rural workers did so. A precedent was established for the organization of peasants into co-operatives (asentamientos).

Not only did UP use Frei's law, but the whole agrarian reform process under Allende was moulded by the experience of the Christian Democrats. Popular Unity intended to intensify the reform process begun by Frei, while overcoming the negative aspects of the PDC endeavour. The agrarian reform had been a major element in the political defeat of the Christian Democrats. It alienated the Right for being too radical and was criticized by the Left for proceeding

too slowly, thereby contributing to the political polarization that Frei suffered. Under the reform 30,000 peasant families at the most were given land, compared with the 100,000 families promised in the "Revolution in Liberty" programme, and this redistribution was at high cost. Another criticism was that the campesinos participated little in the reform, that bureaucratic paternalism replaced the paternalism of the patron.[26]

Under Allende, agrarian reform was intensified both quantitatively and qualitatively. In 1971 the government expropriated 1,373 farms, almost as many as in the entire 1965-1970 period, and the further expropriation of over two thousand farms in 1972 virtually eliminated the latifundia system.[27]

The acceleration of land expropriation was not only at the government's initiative, but was also a response to pressure by the peasants themselves. During the first months of 1971 there were hundreds of land seizures, or tomas, beginning among the 300,000 Mapuche Indians and spreading through the south of Chile. This outbreak of peasant unrest was generally attributed to the Christian Democrat mobilization of, but failed to satisfy, the campesino.[28]

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26. see W.H. Agor, 'Senate vs CORA: An Attempt to Evaluate Chile's Agrarian Reform to Date' in Inter-American Economic Affairs, Autumn 1968, 47-53; S. Barroclough, 'Agrarian Reform and Structural Change in Latin America: The Chilean Case' in The Journal of Development Studies, Jan. 1972, 163.

27. figures from ECLA, Economic Survey of Latin America, 1972, New York 1974, 73.

28. see 'Tierra o Muerte - Land for the People' in Nacla, 66-75; D. Tiranti and G. Petersen, 'Allende's Land Revolution' in The New Internationalist, May 1975, 15-17.

The rapid spread of tomas put political pressure on the government in Santiago in two ways, apart from the direct pressure of peasant actions. Firstly, the tomas presented an alternative revolutionary strategy to the institutional approach to which Popular Unity was committed. Many of the land invasions were led by the Guevara-inspired revolutionaries of the MCR (Revolutionary Peasant Movement, the rural branch of the MIR), who saw their role as to mobilize and radicalize the peasants. At the extreme were the much publicized activities of Commandante Pepe, who had reportedly seized a large area of land on the Argentine border and was training the peasants there in guerrilla warfare.[29] But it is unlikely that most of the tomas represented a high level of political consciousness among the Chilean peasants. The campesinos were pragmatic, seizing land more often in response to a bad landowner or to specific actions like the destruction of crops or livestock.[30]

Secondly, widespread rural disorder gave the opposition parties the opportunity to accuse the government of provoking violence and of encouraging extreme leftist groups. A problem arose in that some of the farms seized, usually by Mapuche Indians, were under the legal limit of 80 hectares. Highlighted by the opposition, these seizures disturbed small landowners, despite Allende's reassurances that they would not be touched by agrarian

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29. see A. Horne, 'Commandante Pepe' in Encounter, July 1971, 33-40.

30. The pragmatism of the Chilean peasant regarding agrarian reform is stressed by R.R. Kaufman, The Politics of Land Reform in Chile, 1950-1970; J.F. Petras and H. Zemelman Merino, Peasants in Revolt: A Chilean Case Study, 1965-1971, Austin 1972.

reforms.

The tomas put the government in a difficult position. It could not use force against the people it claimed to represent, and had as warning the political cost to Frei of using troops to remove peasants, culminating in the Puerto Montt massacre.[31] Moreover it believed that the land seizures by the campesinos were morally justified, especially those by the Mapuches, which Agricultural Minister Jacques Chonchol described as legitimate "recuperation of land taken from them by force".[32]

The new government responded by accelerating agrarian reform, while trying to dissuade the MCR and the peasants from further seizures. Allende declared that he had "established that the agrarian reform be carried out under the Agrarian Reform Law. Under no circumstances will we accept or proceed in an arbitrary way".[33] After a confrontation between police and landless peasants in Santiago province in May, the MIR agreed to end land seizures unless the landowner abused or the government failed to redistribute the land. But despite the heat generated by the tomas, the peasants and government mutually aided each other: the peasants made the acceleration of reform imperative, and the government used peasant action as justification for more intensive reform.

The Allende government designated Cautin province as the first for full-scale agrarian reform, for a combination of social and political reasons. The province had scarcely been touched

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31. Sigmund, 139.

32. Economist, 10 April, 1971, 44.

33. S. Landau, 'An Interview with Allende' in Nacla, 17.

during Frei's administration, and the situation of the peasants, including the largest concentration of Mapuche Indians, was as bad as any in the country. The province also remained a conservative political stronghold, which agrarian reform would destroy. To overcome the problem of a lack of understanding between the central reform administration and the local peasants, Chonchol moved his whole agricultural ministry to Temuco, the provincial capital of Cautin.[34]

The qualitative change in UP's agrarian policy was also inspired by the experience of reform under the Christian Democrats and could be traced in the political development of Jacques Chonchol. Chonchol, who had worked on agrarian reform in Cuba in the early 1960's as an agricultural economist, was director of the government agency INDAP under Frei. In 1968 he resigned because of frustration with the slow tempo of land reform. Disappointment with the shortfall in the results of Frei's reform led to a reappraisal of the inherent contradiction of reformism: its benefits were received by only some of the people who deserved them. Even if Frei had fulfilled his promise to give 100,000 families land, there would still be another 300,000 rural families landless.

The same problem was found in the asentamientos, temporary co-operatives into which the reformed land sector was organised. A conflict of interest arose between the permanent asentados, who had the prospect of becoming individual landowners in a few years,

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34. see T. Harding, 'Agrarian Reform - Cautin Province' in Nacla, 76-8.

and the rural workers who did not live permanently on the farms. For the latter, agrarian reform more often entailed loss than benefit, by shutting them out from traditional employment without replacing it.[35]

Thus the problem of reform, as offered by Frei, was that it excluded more people than it included. Moreover reform, as a definition of future organization, shut out peasants not only from the present process but from the hope of future inclusion. Chonchol believed that the entire agrarian system had to be overhauled if the problems of "reformism" were to be avoided. Joining UP as an original member of MAPU, and appointed minister of agriculture by Allende, he pursued certain priorities.

First, the paternalism of the traditional social structure required more than simply land redistribution if it was to be broken. As a technician rather than a politician, Chonchol saw the question of organization in a practical rather than ideological or political manner, needing a plurality of solutions rather than a single formula. In the 1960's he wrote,

> the problem of the land cannot be solved by standard dogmatic formulas which come from various ideologies. There are different situations, different aspirations, different degrees of pressure of the peasant masses on the land, which require a careful analysis of every concrete detail.[36]

One defect of the asentamiento was that since it was organized on the same dimensions as the original farm it tended to perpetuate

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35. see J. Chonchol, 'The Agrarian Policy of the Popular Government' in Zammit (ed.), 107-14.

36. J. Chonchol, 'Eight Fundamental Conditions of Agrarian Reform in Latin America' in R. Stavenhagen (ed.), Agrarian Problems and Peasant Movements in Latin America, New York 1970, 167.

the traditional agrarian image.

The UP government began to organize the reformed sector into Agrarian Reform Centres, by combining various neighbouring farms to form larger units. This structure sought to make the farms more productive, by allowing a degree of specialization, and to absorb a greater number of rural workers. However there was peasant resistance to the new organization, especially by those who benefitted under the asentamiento system.[37]

Secondly, Chonchol stressed the need to reform other economic sectors, especially the banking system and the industrial monopolies, to coincide with agrarian reform.

> I say that agrarian reform cannot be ended at the door of the latifundia. It must be developed in other sectors of the society, because if you don't do this, there arrives a time when agrarian reform is cut off.[38]

The UP government saw agrarian reform not just on its own, but as part of the whole socialization programme in Chile, a process to take place simultaneously with and complimentary to the overall changes UP was making.[39] Chonchol summed up the qualitative change in agrarian reform and the different objective that resulted.

> The problem is not to give a piece of land to 100,000 families - our original goal - but to change the whole structure of agriculture and the relation of agriculture with the rest of the economy. That is much more important.[40]

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37. Chonchol, 'The Agrarian Policy of the Popular Government', 110-12.

38. J. Chonchol, 'Land Reform in Chile' in The Canadian Forum, Nov. - Dec. 1970, 300.

39. 'The Programme of Unidad Popular', 39-40.

40. Chonchol, 'Land Reform in Chile', 300.

With favourable weather, agricultural production in 1971 increased 6 per cent despite the intensive reform process and rural unrest. But the May to May agricultural year in Chile meant that the spring planting had been completed before Allende came to power and the 1971 harvest took place early in the year, before the unrest reached many rural areas.

However, according to Allende, agrarian reform was only part of the plan for Chilean development. "... the agrarian reform is part of a process. That process has as its essential foundation, first to recover the basic wealth of Chile and put it in the hands of Chileans."[41] The priority remained the breaking of dependence, involving the recovery of Chile's natural resources from foreign domination. The UP government claimed that $10.8 billion had been taken out of the country by U.S. companies - the basic cause of Chilean underdevelopment.[42] Moreover, the government counted on the increased surplus it expected to receive after nationalization to maintain levels of investment in other sectors of the economy.[43]

Allende's focus on foreign involvement in Chile was understandable from a political as well as an economic viewpoint. Firstly, the forces of the UP coalition were unified less intrinsically than by what they were against, and it was unanimously agreed that American imperialism was the main enemy. Secondly, the wider appeal of Allende related not to his Marxist socialism, but

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41. Landau in Nacla, 17.

42. New York Times, 25 Jan., 1971, 72.

43. see Allende, 160-1.

to nationalism. The unanimous vote in Congress for copper nationalization, and the general public indignation at the revelation in April 1972 of ITT activities at the time of the 1970 election, were indications of the strong nationalist feelings in Chile which Allende could channel to validate and give impetus to his socialist policies. In the struggle for power, Allende could rally Chileans behind the nationalist cry in a way that he could not with appeals to their socialist spirit.

The Allende government defined its foreign policy towards the United States more carefully and precisely than did its campaign rhetoric. Allende did not wish to antagonise the American government unnecessarily, especially while his government was nationalizing U.S. corporate holdings. Although the Chilean government pursued an independent and non-aligned foreign policy, establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba, Communist China, East Germany and Albania, and recognising North Vietnam and North Korea, Allende assured the United States that his government would never permit Chile to be used for a military base by any foreign power. The UP government also chose, despite previous denunciations, to stay in the OAS, reflecting a traditional Chilean position of seeking to modify U.S. policy towards Latin America from within the inter-American system.[44] In the New York Times, Foreign Minister Clodomiro Almeyda drew a careful distinction between anti-imperialism and anti-Americanism.

> Chile's international policy is not aimed against any people in the world. Consequently, neither is it against the people of the United States. It is a

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44. see ibid., 67-8, 107-8, 167-70.

> policy designed to break the dependent relationship of Chile's economy with respect to interests which are not ours.[45]

Copper was at the heart of the matter; "Chile's salary", and the national symbol of foreign exploitation and economic dependence. In Chile the saying went: "They took the copper and left us the holes".

Unlike the nationalization of other industries, that of the copper industry required the government to pass new legislation in order to annul the agreements made with the copper companies under Frei's "Chileanization" programme. Since the Anaconda settlement in 1969 required bilateral agreement to be changed, Allende opted to use a constitutional amendment to permit nationalization. This implied a change in mood: whereas the "Chileanization" agreements had been negotiated by the state copper corporation (CODELCO), nationalization would be forced through by law.[46] Also, as Sigmund notes,

> the use of the complicated and lengthy procedure of a constitutional amendment meant that a possible confrontation on the issue between Chile and the United States was avoided for the time being and that a national consensus was developed in Chile behind the takeover.[47]

The five big mines to be nationalized were Chuquicamata, El Salvador and Exótica (Anaconda), El Teniente (Kennecott), and Andina (Cerro). The State had a 51 per cent interest in Chuquicamata, El Salvador and El Teniente, 25 per cent in Exótica and 30 per cent in Andina, but the administration of the mines was in the hands of the

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45. New York Times, 25 Jan., 1971, 73.

46. see G. Atria, 'Chileanizing the Copper Mines' in The Canadian Forum, Nov. - Dec. 1970, 294-7.

47. Sigmund, 141.

foreign partners. The constitutional amendment was unanimously supported by Congress on July 11, 1971, government posters declaring that Chile had put on long trousers. The amendment incorporated into the Constitution two new concepts, of nationalization (different from the earlier established concept of expropriation) and of limiting excess profits on foreign capital.[48]

The crucial issue was not of nationalization, which the American companies had come to accept as inevitable, but of compensation for the nationalized properties. The law provided for the deduction of "excess profits", the level to be decided by the president, during the period 1955-1970. In September Allende announced that the "excess profits" of Anaconda and Kennecott, at the rate of over 12 per cent, were $774 million. Then the Chilean controller-general established the book value of the industries, as of 31 December 1970, at $663.2 million, from which he deducted $51.8 million for assets in poor state of repair or obsolete. This meant that with the deduction of "excess profits", no compensation was owed for the Chuquicamata, El Salvador and El Teniente mines. Compensation was paid for the newer mines, $14.8 million for Exótica and $20.2 million for Andina. In addition, the Chilean government took responsibility for debts of $726 million contracted under the expansion programme initiated by the Frei government.[49]

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48. ECLA, Economics Survey of Latin America, 1971, 117.

49. figures from ibid.; see 'The Nationalization of Copper' in Allende, 78-83.

The copper nationalization was not only a moment of symbolic transcendence for Chile, but also the vital issue in determining the nature of U.S. relations with the new Marxist government in Chile. American opposition to Allende was primarily economic. Antipathy to his Marxism, while still evident, was of less concern. In Peru, where a reformist military government under General Velasco had embarked on a course of expropriation of foreign investment in 1968, the United States had engaged in pressure tactics through its aid programme and international financial institutions. Under the Hickenlooper Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act, the U.S. President was required to suspend aid to a country which expropriated the property of American citizens without "appropriate steps" toward "speedy compensation". The Nixon administration was characterized by a strong identification with U.S. corporate interests. Moreover, through OPIC (Overseas Private Investment Corporation) the American government offered major corporations with overseas holdings insurance if their interests were nationalized without compensation. This represented a major commitment by Washington to the security of private American investment in other countries. In the case of the copper companies in Chile, the amount was so great that OPIC would have to seek extra funds from the U.S. Congress to meet their claims. A National Security Decision Memorandum issued by the CIA in early November 1970, although long before the nationalization issue developed, concluded that "the United States has no vital interests in Chile. There would however be tangible economic losses."[50]

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50. quoted by P. Sigmund, 'U.S. Policy Towards Chile: Books in Review' in Latin American Research Review, III 1976, 127 n.

Two policy lines emerged in the formulation of United States policy towards the Allende government. A "hard" line was consistently pushed by certain corporations with immediate vested interests such as ITT, some government agencies, specifically the CIA and the Treasury, and the Nixon-Kissenger team in the White House.[51] This group saw economic nationalism in Latin America as something to be confronted. Texan Secretary of Treasury John Connally saw Chile as a test case, which the United States should use to deter other Latin American countries from nationalizing U.S. corporate interests.[52] The fear was of a "ripple effect" of nationalizations throughout the continent. The hardliners also laid greater emphasis on Allende's Marxism, raising the spectre of "a second Fidel". President Nixon regarded the Marxist threat in Chile as more subtle, but just as real as in Cuba, Vietnam and the Middle East.[53]

A "soft" line, pushed by other corporate interests, the American press, and the State Department, urged co-existence with Allende rather than confrontation. The ITT documents complained of the general reluctance of the American business community to take a hard line against Chile.[54] The State Department believed that Chile was not another Cuba, and likened Allende more to the Argentinian Peron than to Castro.

Between these two lines, U.S. policy towards Allende developed

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51. see D. Eisenhower, 'The Low Profile Swings a Big Stick' in Johnson (ed.), 42-71; ITT, Subversion in Chile, Nottingham 1972; E. Korry, 'The Sell-Out of Chile and the American Taxpayer' in Penthouse, March 1978, 70 ff.

52. Business Week, 10 July, 1971, 65.

53. R. Nixon, Memoirs, London 1978, 489.

54. ITT, 27, 40.

in three stages. Initially the government adopted a cool but "correct" diplomacy, a period of waiting and confusion. That American policy was neutral was contradicted by the NSDM 93 memorandum, which called for the termination of new bilateral aid and attempts to dry up the flow of new multilateral credit and other financial assistance. After Allende's election, the American Export-Import bank dropped Chile to its lowest credit rating. However, the U.S. government officially denied Chilean allegations that any such policy existed, similar to its denials a decade earlier that the United States was involved in a plan designed to invade Cuba.

During the period between the formal nationalization of the copper companies and President Allende's decision on compensation, the U.S. Government adopted a warning policy. It attempted to pressure Chile on the compensation issue by withdrawing a $21 million loan through the Eximbank for the purchase of three Boeing jets for the Chilean airline, LAN, announcing that the postponement of the loan was related to the copper issue. The American move was denounced by the Chilean press and by the ambassador in Washington, Orlando Letelier.[55]

With Allende's "excess profits" decision, U.S. policy moved to the third stage, already prefigured by NSDM 93. The emergence of the hard line coincided with a bureaucratic shift in policy formulation from the State Department to the Treasury. All U.S. aid programmes to Chile, with the notable exception of military aid,

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55. Sigmund, The Overthrow of Allende, 153.

were officially suspended. When the UP Government was trying to reschedule its foreign debt payments for 1971 and 1972 at the Club of Rome in Paris, the United States consistently tried to tie negotiation to compensation for the expropriated copper companies.

This policy was still not as determined or concerted as the economic blockading and isolation of Cuba. There was some evidence that the United States was still prepared to give loans in exchange for compensation.[56] It seems also that American business was less willing to embark on an economic war with Chile. Moreover, Chile did not face the formal multilateral blockade brought against Cuba through the OAS; indeed, by 1970 several Latin American countries were moving to break that blockade, led by Chile. Yet the intent behind U.S. policy was similar to that against Cuba: the weakening of the Chilean economy in order to effect the downfall of the government, a policy known in the language of the Nixon administration as "destabilization".

But despite an intensification of opposition to the Allende government among the Christian Democrats and in U.S. policy, overall Popular Unity retained the political initiative in its first year of office. The increase in popular support for the government, seen in April 1971, was a sign that Allende had delivered the necessary material improvement to the people.

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56. U.S. Ambassador Korry offered Allende the possibility of compensation in the form of 25 year, low interest notes for Anaconda and Kennecott. The offer was related to the American government's insurance burden through OPIC, rather than concern for the copper companies, but was apparently vetoed by PS Secretary - General Altamirano. United States Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs, United States and Chile during the Allende Years, Washington 1975, 649-50.

Opposition remained more at the level of talk than action, with the exception of the south, outbreaks of violence were isolated rather than widespread. The Allende government had avoided a major confrontation with the opposition-dominated Congress by not insisting on rejected proposals like those for neighbourhood courts and a unicameral parliament. The Christian Democrats had also evaded confrontation with UP, for fear of being branded reactionary if they were over-intransigent.[57]

Moreover, there was the personal popularity of Allende, who proved a firm and persuasive president. His personality was admirably suited to the political game as it was played in 1971. One foreign observer wrote, "Dr. Allende is a consummate political technician, with a remarkable talent for detaching means from ends".[58] Allende also benefitted from the prestige that a Chilean president accrued, and from the post-election revolutionary fervour among the Left and the young.

However, some sectors of the Chilean Left were seeking a more charismatic leader, a second Fidel. There was a strong current of authoritarianism particularly in the Socialist party and among the New Left. The mystique of "el companero presidente" was invented. "This mystique is just what is needed to awaken the people from the lethargy and frustration in which they have been submerged."[59] Allende the revolutionary responded to this

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57. Garcés in Medhurst (ed.), 48.

58. Economist, 10 April, 1971, 41.

59. F. Hurtado, 'A South American Mao Emerges in Chile' in Johnson (ed.), 169.

romanticism, but it was possible that Allende the committed and pragmatic democrat would prove unable to fulfil the image that had been created of him.

While 1971 was the year of Popular Unity initiative, it was also "a year of definitions".[60] As a result of its policies, the UP government was in greater control of the country, but also had less flexibility of action after a year. Economy Minister Pedro Vuskovic recognised that in many sectors of the economy spare capacity had been fully utilised, placing a natural check on the mini-boom of the first year.[61] Other economic limitations were also becoming evident. Private investment had shrunk, leaving the burden on government investment, which was financed by increases in the money supply and by deficit financing of $300 million. The foreign reserves of $341 million left by Frei had also been utilized. Outside the control of the Chilean government, world copper prices fell by more than twenty per cent from the record high prices of the late 1960's, so that although the volume of Chilean exports rose 4 per cent, their value fell by 7.4 per cent.[62] Meanwhile the UP's expansion policy had set up inflationary pressures which threatened to overflow the government's economic planning. "In January 1972 it was no longer a question of trying to cure an acute depression, but of trying to manage an economy which was beginning to exceed all its bounds."[63]

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60. S. de Vylder, Allende's Chile, Cambridge 1976, 80.
61. see Vuskovic in Zammit (ed.), 55.
62. ECLA, 1971, 108.
63. De Vylder, 78.

Eduardo Novoa observed that the government had exhausted the variety of legal mechanisms at the disposal of the executive. This left the transformation in the institutional structure of the state more imperative if the transition to socialism was to proceed.[64] In his conversation with Debray, Allende said:

> Now then, if these things - affirming our national sovereignty, recording our basic wealth and attacking monopolies - do not lead to Socialism, I don't know what does.[65]

By the end of 1971, the Popular Unity government had achieved all these aims, yet the question of power had not been resolved. Indeed, the municipal elections of April and other by-elections in 1971 revealed an institutional deadlock, with government and opposition evenly balanced. Meanwhile, the increasing polarization of political forces suggested that the political struggle was only intensifying.

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64. see Novoa in Zammit (ed.), 29-30.

65. Debray, 85.

CHAPTER V

THE INITIATIVE SHIFTS TO THE OPPOSITION

The second year of the Allende government was characterized by a shift in the political initiative from the government to the opposition. This was a result both of mounting problems besetting Popular Unity and of developing confidence and coherence among the various opposition groups. The struggle for political power was driven along two patterns: the politics of brinkmanship and deepening polarization.

The political struggle developed a push-pull rhythm as the various political actors played a game of brinkmanship, testing their opponents' strength, alternating confrontation with compromise. The new U.S. ambassador to Chile, Nathaniel Davis, commented in a secret cable to the State Department, "The Chileans have a great ability to rush to the brink, embrace each other, and back off."[1] These tactics tested the Chileans' reputation as born compromisers. They also saw the development of rhetoric as an integral element in the political process, generating its own response. Although, as Dudley Seers wrote at the time, "many of the gestures now being made are really designed primarily to obtain a better bargain", these gestures encouraged the general momentum of polarization.[2]

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1. quoted by P.E. Sigmund, The Overthrow of Allende, Pittsburgh 1977, 170.

2. D. Seers, 'Chile: is the road to Socialism blocked?' in The World Today, May 1972, 207.

Political polarization had been apparent in Chile since the late 1960's, weakening the political Centre and the politics of consensus. It had contributed to the decline of Eduardo Frei's government and, through the split in the non-Marxist parties in 1970, had been the primary prerequisite for the election of Salvador Allende. Allende's socialization programmes had accelerated the momentum of polarization among the political parties, encouraging the definition of pro- and anti-government blocs. However, with its intensification, the polarization process began to move deep into society. In 1971 the political struggle had been largely conducted by the parties in the traditional arena of national politics. In Allende's second year the Chilean people began to become actively involved in the political struggle, often emerging as more militant than their political leaders. This intensifying conflict within Chilean society, which for many observers was the realization of Marx's class struggle, also achieved a degree of autonomy in relation to the political system.[3] The result was an ever-increasing danger that Chilean politics would lose its safety-valve of compromise, that the Chileans would rush to the brink and not be able to back off. As Sigmund wrote, "succeeding confrontations between supporters of the government and the opposition eroded the framework of constitutionalism and civility which had held the Chilean polity together".[4]

The optimism of the Chilean Left in Allende's first year was burst in January 1972 when two by-elections, as usual elevated to

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3. see I. Roxborough, 'Reversing the Revolution: the Chilean opposition to Allende' in P. O'Brien (ed.), Allende's Chile, New York 1976, 192-216.

4. Sigmund, 161.

national significance, went against the government. Following the precedent of July 1971 the Christian Democrats and the National party co-operated informally in the nomination of candidates. These electoral reverses further discouraged the Allende government from calling a plebiscite to by-pass Congress. Sigmund estimates that the government coalition dropped 4 to 7 per cent on its vote in the 1971 elections.[5]

After the political setback, in February the UP leaders met at El Arrayan just north of Santiago. They recognized that Popular Unity had failed to involve a majority of Chileans in the country's "process of revolutionary transformation", citing bureaucratic ineptitude, administrative dishonesty and sectarian political attitudes. More significantly, an internal Communist Party document, leaked to the conservative paper El Mercurio, blamed the MIR's extremist rhetoric and its promotion of land seizures and urban violence for alienating the middle sectors of the Chilean population. In the by-election in the rural province of Linares particularly, the fall in government support was attributed to the continued violence promoted by the radical Left. The MIR in turn accused the PC of debilitating the "revolutionary mobilization of the masses" and of keeping MIR members out of government jobs.[6]

This sectarian strife resulted from long-standing differences brought to the surface by the interconnected pressures of a worsening economic situation, declining popular support and hardening opposition. As the Christian Democrats experienced in the middle of their term when faced with the same problems, an evolutionary/revolutionary

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5. see Ibid., 164-6.

6. L.A. Sobel (ed.), Chile and Allende, New York 1974, 69-70.

dichotomy emerged within the Left concerning the way to regain the political initiative: consolidate in order to advance, or advance in order to consolidate.

The Communist and Radical parties wanted a period of consolidation, emphasizing productivity, economic efficiency and worker discipline, especially in the nationalized enterprises. More pragmatic and better organized than the PS, the PC promoted a Battle of Production.

> The essential thing is to develop the consciousness of the workers, to attain a change in their mentality in order to assume these new responsibilities that the conquest of power implies.[7]

The Socialist Party and MAPU within UP, and the MIR outside, pushed for radicalization of the revolutionary process. The PS felt it was necessary "to convert the present process into an irreversible march toward socialism", since, in the words of Altamirano,

> The actual class struggle is irreconciliable, that is, there is no place for either conciliation or coexistence. It will come to an end only when one of the classes assumes complete power.

MAPU Secretary-General Oscar Garretón asserted that "the socialist tasks are the most important ones today".[8]

In political terms the conflict centred on the Left's approach towards the "middle sectors", represented by the Christian Democrats in opposition and the Radicals in the government. The PC advocated

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7. Communist daily El Siglo, 'Work Without Rest to Win the Battle of Production' in D.L. Johnson (ed.), The Chilean Road to Socialism, Garden City 1973, 178-180.

8. 'The Political Position of the Socialist Party' in Johnson (ed.), 174; S. de Vylder, Allende's Chile, Cambridge 1976, 86.

negotiating with and neutralizing the Christian Democrats, in order to keep the opposition divided. However this strategy demanded that the government maintain the living standards of the middle sectors. The PS warned the government not to become an arbitrator in the class conflict, but to place itself resolutely on the side of the workers. Acceleration of the revolutionary process would force the middle sectors to define themselves in relation to socialism.[9]

Allende, who was close to the consolidationist position, had an opportunity to define government direction in June when the entire cabinet resigned to facilitate a change in economic policy. The controversial Pedro Vuskovic was removed as economy minister, yet remained in the government as director of a new unit to co-ordinate economic programmes. He was replaced by Socialist Carlos Matus, considered more pragmatic and less of a Marxist ideologue, as minister of the economy, and the Communist Orlando Millas as finance minister. But, as the Economist observed, "Once again, Sr Allende has resorted to political hope-trading instead of making a fundamental choice of strategy."[10]

Allende's response to Communist pressures to control the radical Left was also inconclusive. The formation of a leftist "popular assembly" in Concepción (Chile's third largest city) in early August, representing the thesis of dual power, was denounced by the president, who asserted that it was "unrealistic politics to separate the Chilean revolution from the country's democratic

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9. see De Vylder, 85-6; 'The Political Position of the Socialist Party', 172-8.

10. Economist, 24 June, 1972, 36.

system".[11] At the same time a police raid on a MIR-controlled shantytown in the Lo Hermida district of Santiago, representing a symbolic attempt by the government to control armed leftists, demonstrated to Allende the political costs of trying to restrain the MIR. The night raid led to the death and wounding of civilians, suspension of the heads of the Investigaciones police branch, and further alienation of the radical Left from the government.[12]

Allende resorted to a pattern of compromise: he inclined towards the position of the Communists, who therefore represented the mainstream in the government, but the Socialists were allowed a veto power over the government's activities. Allende was afraid both of splitting his own party, the largest in the UP coalition, and of becoming too dependent on the more cautious Communists. While he pursued legal, democratic methods, he kept the line open to proletarian radicalism.[13]

The Socialist veto was vital for blocking Allende's options of compromise and avenues of retreat, the safety-valves of Chilean politics. The Socialists prevented the possibility of a compromise with the United States, offered by Korry, over the issue of copper compensation, and of a productive dialogue developing between the UP government and moderate Christian Democrats. One can only

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11. Sobel (ed.), 89.

12. see Sigmund, 177-8.

13. A Socialist veto power is mentioned by Ambassador Edward Korry to United States Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs, United States and Chile during the Allende years, Washington 1975, 649-50; F. Bourricaud, 'Chile: Why Allende Fell' in Dissent, Summer 1974, 406; Economist, 7 Oct., 1972, 51; Sigmund, 178.

speculate whether the rise of hard-line opposition to Allende in American foreign policy and in the PDC could have been thwarted if Allende had overridden this veto. Nevertheless, he allowed the radical Left to limit drastically his flexibility of action, upon which his transitional position and democratic commitment depended.

The pressures that threatened to blow apart the tenuous unity of the Chilean Left resulted primarily from a rapidly deteriorating economic situation. The government's ability to deal with the emerging problems was further inhibited by its own strategy, so that as De Vylder notes,

> the UP's reactivation program once initiated, became impossible to check for both economic and political reasons. Tough stabilitization policies were out of the question, since the good times should continue. We recall Dr Allende's words about 'continuing expansion' being a necessary condition for the viability of the 'Chilean road to socialism'.

He writes that, "Behind the 1972-3 inflation lay an explosive increase in the quantity of money in circulation in Chile".[14] The endemic Chilean problem of inflation returned at a much faster rate than ever in the past. Consumer prices rose by 77.8 per cent over 1971 in terms of annual averages, and by 163.41 per cent, if the December indexes are compared, with the steepest rise in food prices. Allende was caught in a wage-drift trap, giving the Chilean people large wage and salary increases (22 per cent at the beginning of 1972 and 100 per cent increase in October) to maintain their purchasing power.[15] Stabilization measures introduced by the Matus-Millas team, including a drastic currency evaluation, price

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14. De Vylder, 90, 88.

15. figures from ECLA, Economic Survey of Latin America, 1972, New York 1974, 68-71.

rises in the nationalized sector, and limited agricultural price increases, only accelerated inflation, although Matus hoped to bring stability "at a higher level". Criticism of the Matus policy by some sectors of the Left represented an unrealistic attitude of simply forgetting about inflation. An economic adviser to the Central Bank and the Allende government wrote in a report,

> There are people, apparently, who think that there is something non-revolutionary in taking inflation seriously, that the monetary factor isn't real... There is nothing revolutionary about ideas that do not work and entail political disadvantage.[16]

Spiralling inflation combined with a stagnation in economic growth after the mini-boom of 1971, the gross national product rising only 3 per cent compared with 8 per cent in the previous year. The industrial sector grew by only 2.8 per cent, a clear indication that the margins of idle capacity upon which the Allende government had relied were exhausted as a result of the rapid expansion of 1971. Rapid expansion had also produced bottlenecks in production, having an accumulative effect and resulting in shortages of a variety of goods from food to capital equipment. Long queues outside food stores and a widespread black market became part of the Chilean daily life.

Economic stagnation also resulted from a lack of new investment in the Chilean economy and deteriorating productivity in the nationalized sectors of the economy. Foreign and domestic investors were wary of Chile under Popular Unity for a combination of commercial and political reasons: the uncertainties generated

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16. E. Boorstein, Allende's Chile: An Inside View, New York 1977, 197.

by economic difficulties and the Marxist nature of the government. Edward Korry described the cost inherent in Vuskovic's economic programme: "as your consumption goes up across the board, your import bill must go up rapidly. As you nationalize, your access to private sources of capital transfer dries up".[17] The problem was to move from reactivation to accumulation, but President Allende in his annual message to Congress in May 1972 admitted that investment had fallen 7.7 per cent in 1971. Opposition economists, by including the rundown in inventories, claimed it had dropped by 24 per cent.[18]

The Allende government was caught between its short-term consumerist policy and its long-term nationalization programme, exposing it to the worst effects of both. A decrease in the value of exports by 10 per cent with a corresponding 20.3 per cent increase in the value of imports resulted in a balance of payments deficit of about $600 million. At opposite poles of this critical balance-of-payments situation were declining export revenues from copper and increasing expenditure for food imports. Increased food consumption resulting from the government's redistributive policies and problems of agricultural productivity led to a food import bill of $313 million in 1971 and $400 million in 1972. Declining productivity was attributed to the widespread rural unrest as a result of the agrarian reform and land seizures, bad weather in the 1971-2 agricultural year, and poor management in the reformed agricultural sector. It could be argued that much of the state farm activity during the Allende years was political

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17. United States Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs, 10.
18. Sigmund, 177.

rather than economic.[19]

The increased revenues anticipated as a result of the copper expansion programme under the "Chileanization" agreements failed to materialize. Production increased in the El Teniente and Andina mines, but decreased in Chuquicamata, Exótica and El Salvador. This was compounded by a continuing fall in the price for copper on the world market.

Indeed, the big Chilean copper mines make a good case study of the Allende government's nationalization programme, not only because of their central importance to Chile's economic health, but also because the problems there following nationalization were symptomatic of much of the industrial and agricultural state sector. After nationalization the Gran Mineria suffered an operational crisis, both internally and internationally, that affected the whole economic performance of the Allende government.[20]

Internally, the problem was mainly one of organization, of the failure to work out new forms under a socialist government. Norman Gall visited Chuquicamata in February 1972 and reported that although the old hierarchical American-style structure had been swept away, no working order or consensus had been created to replace it. In consequence a conflict developed over worker or state control, a struggle between the mining union leadership and the political

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19. W.R. Duncan, 'Allende's Chile' in H. Desfosses and J. Levesque (eds.), Socialism in the Third World, New York 1975, 15; J. Chonchol in D. Tiranti and G. Petersen, 'Allende's Land Revolution' in The New Internationalist, May 1975, 16.

20. Many of the following ideas derive from N. Gall, 'Chile: The Struggle in the Copper Mines' in Dissent, Winter 1973, 99-109.

appointees, mostly Communist party cadres, to the new state management.[21]

Chuquicamata was a privileged community: its workers were among the best-paid in Chile, and had strong political bargaining power because of the importance of copper production to Chile. The copper workers' union was like many Chilean unions in that it had a leftist leadership, yet its concerns were economic rather than political. A few weeks after the 1970 election, the miners went on strike for a 70 per cent wage increase. Allende, who no doubt noticed that Chuquicamata had voted for Alessandri in the presidential election, talked of a "workers' aristocracy" which the new government could not tolerate.[22]

> We must struggle to bring the truth home to these workers - it is not enough that they should have trade union organization, until and unless it is steeped in revolutionary ideology... The workers in the copper industry must understand that they are not going to enjoy a privileged position far above those of other workers simply because they are in the copper industry.[23]

The ironic situation developed of a leftist government dominated by working-class parties attempting to curb wage demands while the rightest opposition encouraged them. Allende used Fidel Castro's visit in November 1971 to persuade the copper workers to reduce their traditional bread-and-butter demands. To the Chuquicamata copper

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21. On the problems of management and organisation of the industrial sector, see O. Garretón in J.A. Zammit (ed.), The Chilean Road to Socialism, Sussex 1973, 63-8. On the problems of workers' participation, see J. Garcés in Zammit (ed.), 181-6, for a government viewpoint; L. Figueroa in Zammit (ed.), 187-191, for the trade union viewpoint.

22. S. Allende, Chile's Road to Socialism, Middlesex 1973, 112.

23. R. Debray, The Chilean Revolution, New York 1971, 109-10.

miners and to nitrate workers, Castro stressed the importance of workers' discipline and unity among the Left.[24] These calls themselves implied the heterogeneity of the working class in Chile, its failure to consolidate behind Allende, and the decline in labour discipline at the copper mines.

From the copper workers' perspective, the new government management was characterized by political rivalries among members of the various UP parties and mismanagement. Many of the new political appointees had little technological experience in the copper industry. The new management also reduced the benefits that the workers had received from the American companies. Following Allende's election nearly half of the 460 mine supervisors at Chuquicamata, who lived in free company housing and received salaries in dollars, left either for political reasons and/or for better-paid positions offered by the American companies. At the time of Allende's election, Castro had warned him to avoid a loss of technical experience, as Cuba had suffered a decade earlier. The mass exodus of the mine technicians was probably the most important single factor in the stagnation of copper production, and revealed the continuing inadequacy of technological experience in Chile.[25] Chile was dependent on the world's technological centres in another way, as demonstrated at the new Exótica mine, when problems in processing its copper ore developed after nationalization.

> Our technicians in the copper industry are now acutely aware of the political dimension of technological dependence.

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24. see F. Castro, Fidel in Chile, New York 1972.

25. Sigmund, 176.

> In the old days, when our mineral resources were foreign controlled, technical problems were easily resolved. A telex message was simply rushed to the United States and a new part promptly flown in. Now, of course, the replacement of broken parts is not so easily resolved...[26]

In the international struggle over copper nationalization the weapons used by Chilean nationalists were almost wholly political, whereas those of the large foreign companies were mainly technological.

Other pressure tactics adopted by the U.S. companies against Chile included bringing a U.S. Supreme Court action blocking the New York accounts of CODELCO and CORFO. Kennecott also attempted successfully to have Chilean shipments of copper in European ports held, claiming the copper belonged to it. The company issued a White Paper in which it detailed the benefits to Chile of Kennecott's ownership of the El Teniente mine, and saying that although Chile was in its right to nationalize the mine, the "excess profits" decision meant that "the expropriation contravenes accepted principles of international law".[27]

Problems outside government control also affected production. The Kennecott White Paper reported that output at El Teniente was hindered by the most severe drought in over 80 years. The government also pointed to the rundown state of the mines as they had been left by the foreign companies. Most importantly, Chile nationalized its Gran Mineria just when the world copper market moved from scarcity to abundance, causing a dramatic fall in world prices. The ending of the factors that had caused scarcity in the second half of the 1960's, the Vietnam War and a major strike by copper workers in the

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26. J. Cayuela, 'The Hidden Invasion' in Johnson (ed.), 118.

27. 'The Kennecott White Paper on Chile's Expropriation of the El Teniente Copper Mine' in Inter-American Economic Affairs Spring 1972, 37.

United States, coincided with the opening of mines in the early 1970's by the multinational companies in "safer" areas.

In November 1971 Chile called a moratorium on its foreign debt, thus declaring a critical balance-of-payments problem. Increasingly the Chilean government cited as responsible an "invisible blockade" against Chile by the United States. This theme was given credence with the publication by Washington Post columnist Jack Anderson in March 1972 of confidential ITT documents. Quickly translated into Spanish, they revealed that corporation's clandestine efforts to prevent Allende's election in 1970 and its advocacy of an economic blockade against Chile. The references in the documents to Eduardo Frei provoked attacks on him by pro-UP newspapers, although the ITT officials indicated bitterly that Frei had not responded to their approaches. Allende "could be stopped if Frei would stand firm for his country and quit trying to play the part of Hamlet, wishing to go down in history as the great democrat".[28]

On January 19 President Nixon announced a tougher policy against nations that expropriated U.S. property without "prompt, adequate and effective compensation", stating that the United States would "not extend new bilateral economic benefits to the expropriating country".[29] Thus the U.S. government was explicitly and publicly putting economic pressure on Chile. Its economic aid dropped from almost $30 million in 1970 to $8.6 million in 1971 and $7.4 million in 1972, the latter mainly money for existing aid projects.[30] In

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28. ITT, Subversion in Chile, Nottingham 1972, 51.
29. quoted by NACLA, New Chile, New York 1973, 51.
30. figures from United States Senate Select Committee, Covert Action in Chile, Washington 1975, 34.

September Alfonso Inostroza, president of the Chilean Central Bank, claimed that since Allende came to office the World Bank had not issued Chile with one new loan which was directly related to the nationalization of the U.S. copper companies.

> In acting as it did, the World Bank acted not as an independent multinational body at the service of the economic development of all its members, but in fact as a spokesman or instrument of private interests of one of its member countries.[31]

Bank President Robert McNamara replied that internal economic stability was the prerequisite for new loans, claiming that the most important issue was of Chile's creditworthiness, cast into doubt by its debt payment suspension. But he indicated that the Bank had also reviewed the copper nationalization in its lending policy.[32]

The existence of external economic pressure was one thing; its efficacy was another. Efficacy is difficult to assess, but although American pressure undoubtedly had an unsettling effect on the Chilean economy and planning efforts, the Chilean government secured loans from other sources that compensated for the loss of American money.

> The overall volume of credits - and imports - rose markedly, and if the amount and commodity composition of Chilean imports nevertheless turned out to be inadequate it was because of the domestic economic situation which made Chile's import requirements virtually insatiable.[33]

Furthermore, at the Club of Rome in Paris in April 1972 Chile managed to renegotiate most of its foreign debt, so that it was

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31. A. Inostroza, 'The World Bank and Imperialism' in C. Wilber (ed.), The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment, New York 1973, 154.

32. 'Chile and the World Bank' in Inter-American Economic Affairs, Autumn 1976, 81-91.

33. De Vylder, 106.

required to pay only 30 per cent of the amount owed in 1972, despite U.S. attempts to tie refinancing to the compensation issue. In June, the UP government reached a similar agreement with private American banks.

Economic difficulties encouraged the opposition to take a more active initiative. The rhetoric of radicalization and armed conflict by the extreme Left, which was divisive to the Chilean Left, was countered by a developing rhetoric on the Right, which gave cohesion to the disparate groups in opposition. Criticism of the government was especially strong over the government's nationalization of industry, which threatened state totalitarianism, and its toleration of extreme leftist groups, which undermined its democratic commitment. The opposition interpreted statements made by Allende to Régis Debray in the interview published by the Communist newspaper El Siglo as confirmation of those fears. On the question of sedition Allende declared that, "we shall meet reactionary violence with revolutionary violence" but that, "for the time being, to stay within the domain of legality". Allende also said that he had accepted the Statute of Democratic Guarantees "as a tactical necessity".[34]

The challenge to the government came on two fronts: through Congress, where the opposition parties showed increasing coherence, and in the country generally, where two polarized and increasingly militant social forces confronted each other. Effective congressional action against the government required the Christian Democrats to collaborate with the National party, which was unequivocal in its

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34. Debray, 97, 119.

opposition. But the Christian Democrats seemed unwilling to move until they had a social base of support for stronger anti-government action. That base was provided by the effects of a deteriorating economy on the standard-of-living of the middle class. In general, congressional initiatives were encouraged by or began with action by private middle-class groups.

Middle class protest began with the March of the Empty Pots on December 1, 1971, in which 5,000 women from the relatively affluent suburb of Barrio Alto in Santiago banged saucepans in demonstration against food shortages, the rising cost-of-living, and the coincident visit to Chile of Fidel Castro, accused in the opposition press of interfering in internal politics. Street violence ensued when MIR and Communist youths threw rocks at the women, leading to the declaration of a "state of emergency" (a form of martial law) in Santiago.

Other clashes between Marxist and non-Marxist students took place during a struggle for control of the University of Chile. Government plans to restructure the twelve professional schools and faculties led to a conflict between the pro-Christian Democrat university rector, Edgardo Boeninger, and the University Council with a pro-Marxist majority. A series of occupations of various faculties and clashes between pro- and anti-government groups was only quietened after a compromise agreement was reached to hold new university elections in April 1972.[35]

This social violence was the catalyst for the PDC to join in

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35. on Castro's visit, the March of the Empty Pots, and the university conflict, see Sigmund, 162-4.

a congressional initiative to discredit the government by the impeachment of ministers and to delimit the President's flexibility of action by constitutional amendment. In 1971 the Christian Democrats had refused to support a National attempt to impeach Pedro Vuskovic, in return for concessions from the government. But the debacle of the women's march, prompted the Christian Democrats to initiate impeachment proceedings against Interior Minister José Tohá on the grounds that he had permitted armed leftist groups to operate. The announcement of the impeachment by Senator Renán Fuentealba indicated the hardening attitude of a Centre politican who was initially sympathetic to Popular Unity. Moreover, as interior minister, Tohá was second only to the president in the government, a clear warning to Allende. Allende sidestepped the impeachment by retaining Tohá in the government, declaring that the congressional action had been promoted solely for political purposes.

> It must be clearly understood that this is a presidential regime and we will do everything possible to prevent this kind of thing, which is a throwback to an outdated parliamentarian system.[36]

The next interior minister, Hernán del Canto, was impeached on similar grounds during a new wave of intense social tension in July. Again the government declared that the proceedings were political and not constitutional, and switched Del Canto to another portfolio.

Also at the end of 1971, Christian Democrats Juan Hamilton and Fuentealba sponsored a constitutional amendment defining and delimiting the government's nationalization programme. While

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36. Sobel (ed.), 70.

retaining the three areas - public, mixed, and private - of the economy, it required that all nationalizations of private enterprises be carried out by specific congressional legislation, aiming at the congressional regulation of what the president had been doing by legal loophole. The amendment also recommended worker rather than state control, a reflection of the Christian Democrat communitarian ideology.[37]

By vetoing the bill Allende provoked a constitutional debate over whether a simple majority or a two-thirds majority in Congress was necessary to override a presidential vote. Since a change in the legislation in 1970 had not specified which, each side interpreted the legislation favourably to itself. The opposition parties insisted on a simple majority, and wanted to settle the issue with a plebiscite which they were confident of winning. Allende argued for a two-thirds majority, and that the dispute be submitted to the new Constitutional Tribunal, which he believed was sympathetic to the government.

Two attempts were made to come to a compromise in the issue. In April Justice Minister Manuel Sanhueza, a member of the party of the Radical Left (PIR) negotiated with the Christian Democrats. But the agreement he reached, providing for legal regulation of government takeovers, was rejected by the UP Political Command (made up of all Popular Unity parties), again demonstrating the blocking of Allende's options by his own coalition. Allende's veto of the nationalization amendment and the rejection of Sanhueza's

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37. see Sigmund, 158-60.

agreement were the signal for the PIR to leave the government coalition. Its departure was a blow to government aspirations of attracting middle-class support, and was bitterly denounced by Allende.[38] Again in June, on Allende's initiative, negotiations were held between the PDC president Fuentealba and Jorge Tapia of the official Radical party. This time it was the Christian Democrats who broke off the talks, a decision apparently influenced by a forth-coming by-election in Coquimbo.[39] The constitutional issue remained stalemated until the overthrow of Allende in 1973.

In September two other bills met with presidential veto. The first was a constitutional amendment guaranteeing farms under 40 hectares from expropriation, in response to the land seizures and many cases of agrarian reform abuse in which landholdings under the legal limit were taken. The amendment also provided that expropriated land be assigned to the peasants in individual or cooperative ownership within a year, reflecting the PDC's antipathy to state ownership and its capitalization on the resistance of many peasants to the Agrarian Reform Centres.

The second provided for public financing and price guarantees for the press and radio, because of continuing concern for the independence of the news media and the near bankruptcy of the Alessandri paper company. Despite their problems, however, the news media of the Right still had superior resources and reached a far greater audience than that of the Left. The CIA gave over $1.6 million to support El Mercurio (in September 1971 and April 1972),

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38. Ibid., 168-9.

39. Ibid., 170.

which it considered to be the most important channel for anti-Allende propaganda.[40] El Mercurio displayed a Cold War mentality in which, as novelist and diplomat Jorge Edwards wrote, "The political realities of the centre are transformed with retarded myths on the periphery".[41] Ironically, at times these myths complemented those of the extreme Left, such as confusing America with the CIA, and exaggerating both the armed strength of the extreme Left and a climate of anarchy to encourage paranoia among the middle class.

Congress had more success in blocking government proposals, such as controlling inflation through increased taxation. Jacques Chonchol complained that Congress refused to allow material incentives for collective farming, with the result that the campesinos in the reformed sector preferred to work on their own plots rather than on communally held land.[42]

But the constitutional impasse and Allende's ability to sidestep ministerial impeachments only increased the opposition's frustration at being unable to effectively control Allende by constitutional means. Meanwhile the Allende government was proceeding with the nationalization of a list of 91 industries it had drawn up, mostly through the purchase of shares by CORFO. Congress's failure to ensnare Allende in the Constitution, or to convert Chile to a congressional-run system, turned the Christian Democrats to the hard-line National policy of forcing Allende to leave office. There were still different interpretations as to how best to do this: peacefully by plebiscite or impeachment, or force-

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40. U.S. Senate Select Committee, 29, 60.

41. J. Edwards, Persona non grata, London 1977, 271.

42. Tiranti and Petersen, 16-17. On taxation, see Boorstein, 203.

fully by a military coup; whether to push for an immediate confrontation or wait.[43] But Sigmund concludes that in retrospect the Fuentealba-Tapia negotiations "appear to have been the last chance to prevent the polarization which terminated in the 1973 coup".[44]

The middle months of 1972 saw a series of confrontations in various sectors of society between government and opposition, the confrontations both institutional and increasingly militant as people resorted to extra-legal means to show their strength. The university elections held in April and a by-election in Coquimbo in July confirmed the pattern of declining support for the Allende government. At the University of Chile the delay of a few months benefitted the Christian Democrats. Not even Felipe Herrera, former president of the Inter-American Development Bank and a personal friend of Allende, could defeat the incumbent Edgardo Boeninger. Anti-Marxist candidates also narrowly outpolled UP sympathizers on the university council. The attention paid to these elections reflected the polarized condition of Chile, but they were also intrinsically important as the university ran television and radio stations. The victory of the Popular Unity candidate in Coquimbo encouraged the government, but Coquimbo had always been a strong Marxist area and the UP plurality was significantly down on the April 1971 figures.

In April the "First Latin American Encounter of Christians for Socialism" was held in Santiago. Although in principle

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43. Roxborough, 205.

44. Sigmund, 170.

international, the conference grew out of the specific Chilean context and was welcomed by Allende. Drawing on the theology of liberation, the Christians for Socialism intended to serve three main functions: to provide Christian support for the Allende government, to undercut the idea that Christianity and Marxism were incompatible, and to forestall a right-wing exploitation of Christianity by unmasking an unconscious alliance in practice between Christianity and bourgeois ideology. The manifesto issued by the conference was explicitly Marxist in its analysis of Latin American reality.[45]

The Christians for Socialism conference was part of an intense debate within the Catholic Church on socialism in general and the Allende government in particular. A year previously the Chilean Bishops had released a document The Gospel, Politics and Socialism, in which they showed respect for the Allende government, but at the same time opposed doctrinaire Marxism. They believed that Christians could collaborate with Marxists to build a more humane society, provided that their Marxism was pluralist, humanist and undogmatic.[46] The Catholic Church showed its respect for the Allende government in other ways: Cardinal Silva Henriquez held a service on the day of Allende's inauguration which the president attended, and the bishops supported the takeover of the copper industry.

A wave of labour unrest in May-July contributed to polarization.

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45. see 'First Latin American Encounter of Christians for Socialism' in C. Wilber (ed.), 390-400; P. Hebbelthwaite, The Christian-Marxist Dialogue, New York 1977, 57-62.

46. Hebbelthwaite, 58; Sigmund, 145.

"Economistic" strikes for wage increases or better conditions, including those at the Chuquicamata and El Teniente copper mines and the Lota and Coronel coal mines, were encouraged by the opposition parties. Other stoppages at companies were intended to force nationalization by the government. In August Santiago shopkeepers held a one-day strike protesting at inflation, the scarcity of goods, price controls and other official restrictions. Government and opposition supporters clashed with each other and with police in a series of marches, demonstrations and street violence, forcing the government to declare "states of emergency" in Santiago and Concepción. In the south, groups of small landowners began to regain by force land seized by leftists.

While the opposition parties continued their ideological campaign against Allende, there developed also an organizational dimension to the opposition. Particularly important were the gremios, or militant trade associations, such as the Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura (SNA) representing private landowners, the Sociedad de Fomento Fabril (SOFOFA) which claimed to include a majority of Chilean private industrialists, and national confederations of retail store owners, truck owners, professionals and others. The gremios claimed to transcend party politics, and facilitated a sense of identity between the various elements of the middle class, from the small to the large entrepreneur.[47]

This developing coherence in middle-class opposition resulted in the most serious challenge yet to the Allende government and the culmination of the opposition initiative in 1972: the massive,

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47. see Roxborough, 207-10.

nationwide strike of October.[48] The strike began in the deep south in the province of Aysen, where truckers protested against government plans to establish a state trucking agency and the shortage of spare parts. Because of the vulnerability of Chile to dislocations of transportation, the nationwide truckers' strike quickly caused chaos in the distribution and supply of goods. The government immediately called the strike "seditious" and arrested many strikers, including the leader of the truck owner's gremio, León Vilarín.

But the protest snowballed into a popular protest against the UP government, the truckers being joined by most shopkeepers and small businessmen, engineers, bank employees, gas workers, lawyers, architects, taxi and bus drivers, doctors and dentists. Behind the strike lay an accumulation of economic grievances. But it was also clear that many people were using the stike to overthrow the government. The opposition parties expressed support for the strike, and on October 17 Christian Democrat leaders rejected an invitation from Allende to discuss the crisis.[49] Despite widespread rumours, the U.S. 40 Committee did not approve any financial support for the truckers, although the strikers were actively supported by several groups receiving CIA funds.[50] The strike compounded a disastrous beginning to the 1972-3 agricultural year, in which food production declined 2.3 per cent. Heavy rain had stopped the early sowing of seed; when the weather cleared, the truckers' strike meant that the campersinos could not obtain seed, fertilizer or farm

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48. on the truckers' strike, see Sigmund, 184-7.

49. Sobel (ed.), 97.

50. U.S. Senate Select Committee, 2, 31.

machinery.[51]

At the height of the crisis 20 out of 25 provinces were placed under a state of emergency, with the army ensuring a minimum supply of goods, especially food and fuel. The government authorised the takeover of shops that remained closed and took over all radio stations, an action later declared illegal by the controller-general. Parallel workers' organizations, known as cordones industriales, emerged to help establish some co-ordination in the production in requisitioned industries and in supplies to the shantytown areas. Once it became evident that the Allende government would survive, it began to reach agreements with different striking groups, most of whom were back at work by October 25.

The October strike revealed a curious stalemate between the polarized social forces. The strike had brought rapid economic deterioration and political polarization, yet the opposition initiative had not been sufficiently strong to succeed in overthrowing the government. Allende was also forced to compromise. The settlement with the strikers included a pledge by the government not to nationalize trucking, no government reprisals against strikers or strike leaders, and the return of private businesses taken over or requisitioned during the strike.[52] But the opposition was satisfied most by Allende's incorporation of three senior military officers in the new cabinet reorganized on November 5, among them the former commander-in-chief of the army and strong

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51. Tiranti and Petersen, 16.

52. see Sobel (ed.), 98-9, for the terms of the strike settlement.

constitutionalist, General Carlos Prats, in the controversial position of minister of the interior. Military involvement marked a turning point both for the Allende government and for civilian predominance in Chilean politics.

CHAPTER VI

THE MILITARY ENTERS POLITICS

The inclusion of General Prats and his fellow officers in the government in November made explicit a subtle shift of balance in Chilean civil-military relations. For the first time in forty years the armed forces were actively involved in the institutional politics of the country. Less than a year later the armed forces overthrew the Allende government and established a military régime. Why the Chilean military, which enjoyed a reputation in the Latin American continent for its constitutionalism, moved unilaterally against a democratically-elected government and in the brutal manner that it did, involves the nature of the military and its relation to the civil authority, and the events of 1970-73.

There are a number of problems in discussing the role of the military in this dramatic reversal of civil-military relations. Foremost of these is the lack of information. On one level, as an insular institution, a "state within a state", the internal workings of the armed forces were seldom on public display. Information is indeed most limited in the planning of a coup, since this is by definition a conspiratorial action. As such, not only do the activities of the inner core of officers remain shrouded in mystery, but also the conspiratorial element gives rumour and speculation an edge over more factual evidence. This introduces the problem on another level, that of sources. Robinson Rojas, for example, providing a journalistic description of what happened within the armed forces during Allende's regime, uses mostly unidentified sources. Although one cannot dismiss his explanation that to name these sources

would jeopardize the lives of many Chileans, the problem of verification remains.[1]

A problem of interpretation concerns the kind of analysis used. Of three writers concentrating on the Chilean armed forces, Rojas takes a Marxist approach ("The Armed Forces of the bourgeoisie constitute the main support of 'formal democracy' and will always act in its defense"), while Frederick Nunn takes an institutional approach ("In sum, this was a military coup, neither rightest nor leftist, and one which served the interests of Chile as interpreted by the armed forces. Other interests are ancillary.")[2] Alain Joxe attempts to blend both class and institutional analyses, within an explicit "dependency" framework. Thus the military was "a social formation with its own distinct method of organization", yet there was "a great deal of historical evidence on the Chilean armed forces' close ties with imperialism, as well as the impossibility of insulating the military from a class struggle that had polarized the country as a whole." He concludes, "Military interventions are rare in Chilean history, but when they have occurred, it has always been at a critical point in the history of world capitalism."[3]

The relationship of the Chilean armed forces with the United States is also critical: intimate ties are generally emphasized by those taking a Marxist line and diminished by those with an

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1. R. Rojas, The Murder of Allende, New York 1976, 223 n.

2. R. Rojas, 'The Chilean Armed Forces' in D.L. Johnson (ed.), The Chilean Road to Socialism, Garden City 1973, 311; F.M. Nunn, The Military in Chilean History, Albuquerque 1976, 297.

3. A. Joxe, 'The Chilean Armed Forces and the Making of the Coup' in P. O'Brien (ed.), Allende's Chile, New York 1976, 245, 248.

institutional approach. For Roxborough et al., "it is easy enough... to find evidence which suggests that for more than 20 years, the armed forces had been steadily becoming less 'Chilean' and more of a local police force for American imperialism"; Nacla also develops the theme of a patron-client relationship between the United States and the "local" military.[4] Nunn, on the other hand, denies that the relationship was so dependent, arguing for example that U.S. groups seriously miscalculated the Chilean military at the time of Allende's election in 1970.[5]

The terms "armed forces" and "military" are used interchangeably to refer to the four services totalling ninety thousand officers and men: army, 32,000; navy, 18,000; air force, 10,000; and police (carabineros, which included para-military forces), 30,000.[6] Unless otherwise stated, the discussion relates to the officer corps, who were the professional administrators of the military and formed a class or elite of their own. Because of its size and position, the army was the most politically significant of the services. The navy and air force were considered to be more conservative than the army, while the army and the carabineros were more "popular" in composition.

The "apolitical" image of the Chilean armed forces derived not from some static matter of principle, but from specific historical experience. The factors conducive to military acceptance of civilian

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4. I. Roxborough et al., Chile: The State and Revolution, U.S.A. 1977, 187; North American Congress on Latin America, New Chile, New York 1973, 52-3.

5. see Nunn, 268.

6. figures from The Military Balance, 1973-1974, London 1973, 61.

authority were outgrowths of the previous sustained period of intervention, 1924-32: the disastrous end to Ibáñez's military dictatorship (1927-31) and the chaotic, turbulent events of 1931-32 forced the military to retire from political involvement.[7] Nunn writes, "military involvement became synonymous not only with authoritarianism and depression, but with golpe, countergolpe, extremism, continual depression, and government without directions"; "the military appeared as gangrene."[8] There was great civilian antipathy towards the armed forces.

The rejection of the military in politics, combined with a revival of civilian organizational solidarity, fed the belief that civilians could govern better than officers. Although this belief continued until the 1970's, it could potentially be reversed by events since it was itself a reaction to the events of 1931-32. In a 1965 interview published in the magazine Ercilla, a former army commander-in-chief maintained that non-intervention was based on constitutional and professional reasons, but indicated that acceptance of civilian authority was conditional.

> Not only the army - I guarantee - but all the armed forces have a clear doctrine: military power is consciously subordinated to the political power, the Constitution and the laws... never could we intervene on our own, because we are disciplined... Furthermore, history demonstrated to us that never has that intervention been necessary, because our governors have a common sense and good judgement.[9]

For their part, the armed forces recognized the debilitating

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7. see Nunn, 182-194; B.G. Burnett, Political Groups in Chile, Austen 1970, 43-4.

8. Nunn, 185, 183.

9. quoted by A. and J.S. Valenzuela (eds.), Chile: Politics and Society, New Brunswick 1976, 23.

impact of political activity on their professional development and internal unity. The officers rejected politics to avoid the disintegration of the armed forces' corporate identity and integrity. Instead, they chose to concentrate on professional development, which seemed to require that they stay out of politics. The result was a high degree of professionalism, institutional autonomy and corporate cohesion.[10] The armed forces preferred a civilian minister of defense because it allowed the officer corps and general staff a certain insulation, since a civilian would have no authority over professional matters.[11]

One reflection of the Chilean military's "apolitical" stance and corresponding high professionalism was, at least until the 1970's, the lack of an ideology or a "national development" mission, comparable to those developed by the armed forces in Brazil and Peru. In a study of the type of article accepted for the army journal MECH, Nunn concluded that the military had become more technically oriented each decade since the 1930's. "Professional training has not inclined the Chilean armed forces toward a sense of mission, beyond a set of militaristic values."[12]

"Apolitical" did not mean "politically unimportant". The armed forces exercised a veto power on the political system in two

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10. R.R. Kaufman, Transitions to Stable Authoritarian-Corporate Regimes: The Chilean Case, Beverly Hills 1976, 44.

11. see Nunn, 224.

12. Ibid., 265. See also Kaufman, 46; P. Werder, The Military and Modernization in Peru and Brazil, University of Canterbury 1978, chap. IX.

areas: non-interference of civilians in internal military affairs and respect by the civil government for the Constitution.

The first was essentially a quid pro quo arrangement, guaranteeing the independence of the military and civil-political spheres. The armed forces' defence of their institutional unity was translated into several concerns. The economic concern for pay increases and expenditure on military equipment was a reminder that military wages were as much affected by inflation as those of civilians. In October 1969, recently retired General Roberto Viaux led a military revolt at the headquarters of the Tacna Artillery Regiment in Santiago. Viaux maintained that he was concerned solely with professional matters, in particular military pay, and the incident was settled without violence. But the Tacnazo, described by Nunn as "melodramatic, old-fashioned military insubordination", indicated that some sectors of the armed forces were prepared to take political action as a means of resolving political problems. Although most of the military did not support Viaux (who a year later was imprisoned for complicity in the Schneider assassination), he enjoyed a considerable popularity among the rank-and-file of the armed forces.[13]

Another concern of the armed forces was a monopoly on the means of force. This had become more urgent in the 1960's as the spectre of guerrilla warfare increased and the "internal security" function of the armed forces was emphasized. The United States encouraged this function among Latin American militaries, including counter-insurgency training in military bases in the Panama zone and in North America. Cuba remained a provocative motif, and the

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13. see P.E. Sigmund, The Overthrow of Allende, Pittsburgh 1977, 85-7; Nunn, 260.

nationalism of the officer corps was particularly sensitive to any attempts to import subversion.

A related concern was of attempts to infiltrate the armed forces, especially by leftists, opening as it did the military to politically-inspired disunity. For instance, in May 1970 it was reported that 2 army officers and 14 privates had been asked to leave the service because of suspected connections with the MIR. The army commander General Schneider denounced the conspiracy as being "in concommittance with a certain civilian clandestine movement."[14]

The second political role of the armed forces, that of defending the Constitution against civil abuse, was described by a retiring general in 1966.

> Its [the military] duty is to constitute itself as a bulwark of internal security so that the Constitutional government can carry on its work... Our respect as soldiers of the fatherland, is for the Constitutional government. Its breakdown would bring great harm to the country. Initially a certain structuring of authority would be maintained, but soon an open struggle would develop for the highest governmental positions. As long as there is a Constitutional government it will have the unreserved respect of the Armed Forces.[15]

Again, the last sentence qualified the belief that non-intervention was axiomatic. The general accurately foretold the result of a breakdown of the constitutional authority.

"Constitutionalism" also meant respect for a legitimately elected government. The self-consciously "apolitical" armed forces

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14. Times of the Americas, 13 May, 1970, 8.

15. quoted by M.D. Wolpin, Cuban Foreign Policy and Chilean Politics, U.S.A. 1972, 23-4.

did nothing to prevent Allende from assuming office, despite clear evidence that the United States government was encouraging a coup and the coup-directed activities of a few officers congregated around General Viaux, and despite the realization that a large number of people in different spheres were not only prepared to see them act, but wanted them to.

The U.S. Senate report on covert action in Chile noted that on September 15, 1970, President Nixon instructed CIA Director Richard Helms to play a direct role in organizing a military coup d'état to prevent Allende's accession to office. This policy, known as Track II, was distinguished from other efforts against Allende not because its objective was a coup but because of its direct contact with the Chilean military. Without the knowledge of the Departments of State and Defense or of Ambassador Edward Korry, the CIA made 21 contacts with key military and carabinero officials in Chile between October 5-20.[16] On the one hand, the failure of this U.S. activity suggested that the Chilean military was not meekly subservient to the wishes of the political Right or American imperialism. On the other hand, it confirmed that the constitutionalist line was predominant in the armed forces at this point. This was also reflected in the failure of the assassination of General René Schneider, the leading army voice of constitutionalism, to provoke a coup as was evidently intended. The politically-inspired killing shocked the officer corps as it did the nation as a whole. Schneider's

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16. U.S. Senate Select Committee, Covert Action in Chile, 1963-1973, Washington 1975, 23, 25-6.

successor as commander-in-chief of the army was another leading constitutionalist, General Carlos Prats.

Therefore, the 1973 coup d'état and the development by the armed forces of a political ideology were primarily responses to events after 1970. The politicization of the military, not only the rejection of their "apolitical" position but also the decision to overthrow the government, resulted from a variety of pressures: Allende's own policy toward the armed forces, the effect in the country of his policies in general, the activities of other political groups and efforts by the opposition directed toward the military, and moves within the armed forces. However, the interpretation of these pressures was that of the officer corps, and not one handed down from sources external to the military. In 1971 Korry stated before a U.S. congressional committee that "the military will do whatever they wish to do in the defense of Chilean national interest with or without U.S. influence."[17]

In Allende's first year a joke circulated in Chile that the president had to spend twenty-three out of every twenty-four hours worrying about the military. His strategy towards them indicated that he saw the military as a political force and one to have on his side. He wooed them with pay rises and military equipment, thus pre-empting possible material grievances. Allende's generosity contrasted with the relative neglect under Presidents Alessandri and Frei that led to the military discontent expressed in the Tacnazo. Korry remarked to the congressional committee,

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17. U.S. Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs, United States and Chile, Washington 1975, 6.

> The military is extremely placid. It has gotten the best deal that any President in modern history has given to the military... It has received very large pay increases. It has been given almost everything it requests in the way of new equipment... Moreover, on every occasion where national interest is involved, the military is in some way consulted by the President. He shows them a great deal of public deference.[18]

In speeches Allende frequently praised the armed forces for their respect for the Constitution.[19]

At the same time, Allende sought to include the armed forces in his "national development" programme, again capitalizing on military feelings of neglect.

> We believe that the armed forces should not remain on the fringes of what is now taking place and that consequently they should be integrated directly with Chile's process of development. We cannot have powerful armed forces in a country with high rates of mortality and sickness. We cannot afford to have armed forces which are technologically advanced and disproportionally well-equipped in a country whose economic development is inadequate.[20]

Representatives of the armed forces were appointed to various administrative and management positions, in CORFO, the copper corporation, the Pacific Steel company, and various other national production boards. Allende himself met frequently with the military chiefs to discuss policies and to enlist their support.

Allende judiciously refrained from purging officers unsympathetic to his government. Under the Statute of Democratic Guarantees he had pledged not to make reforms in the armed forces, such as "democratization", but he successfully resisted efforts to

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18. Ibid., 4.

19. see S. Allende, Chile's Road to Socialism, Middlesex 1973, 120, 122, 135.

20. Ibid., 135.

remove from the president the right to appoint the service leaders. Allende could effectively purge the officer corps by appointing sympathetic officers further down on the seniority list, since it was military custom for officers more senior to a newly-appointed service chief to retire from active service. But to upset the officer hierarchy in this way would have invited a military coup (both the Tacnazo and the abortive June 1973 coup were led by recently retired officers, around whom other officers rallied demanding their reinstatement). By respecting the norms of officer promotion, Allende was still able to have sympathetic officers heading all four services by early 1972.

For its part the military showed respect for the UP government when it accepted José Tohá, impeached as interior minister by Congress, as defence minister in January 1972. His predecessor was also popular with the armed forces: Alejandra Rios Valdivia, a well-liked, elderly, former military school instructor.[21]

The two major parties in Popular Unity appeared to differ in their attitudes towards the military, as seen during the Tacnazo when the Socialist party supported military claims while the Communist party supported the Frei government. The attitude of the PS, apart from exploiting an opportunity to gain favour with the armed forces, was related to its conception as a product of the "Socialist Republic" of Marmaduke Grove, a military-created experiment.[22] Another underlying cause of sympathy might have

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21. Joxe, 262-3; Nunn, 224.

22. see Sigmund, 85; Nunn, 208-15.

been the greater militaristic tendencies of the Socialists. The Communist party, however, was aware of the anti-Communism that existed in the armed forces and was concerned to "play safe" to avoid a repetition of the 1948-58 repression of the party. The Communists' attitude also reflected their firm commitment to peaceful means.

Allende's policy of involving the armed forces in the political process carried with it the seeds of his downfull. Although the president emphasized that involvement of the military was to utilize their technical capabilities and would not compromise their professional status, his policy encouraged a consciousness of power, or politicization, among the officer corps.[23] In an increasingly polarized political conflict, both government and opposition looked to the military as an independent arbiter, indeed as the only effective mediating force in the country. Both emphasized the military's role as guardian of the Constitution, although for contrasting purposes: the government reaffirmed its legitimacy by reiterating that it was constitutionally elected, while the opposition claimed that UP had lost its legitimacy because of constitutional infringements.

But as Allende and the opposition attempted to strengthen their ties to the military, the army began to divide into constitutional and institutional loyalties. The constitutionalists were foremost, since their leaders - Carlos Prats, Augusto Pinochet, Pablo Schaffhauser - were predominant and encouraged both by Allende and by tradition. The institutionalists emerged only gradually,

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23. Allende, 97, 135-6; Economist, 11 March, 1972, 29.

under the pressure of the political conflict and since their leaders were either retired or neutralized: Viaux was imprisoned then exiled, Colonel Alberto Cabbé was retired in January 1971, and General Alfredo Canales in September 1972. Whereas the constitutionalists believed that unity of the armed forces lay in adherence to the Constitution, the institutionalists believed in protecting the military against any disrupting association with leftist politics.[24]

The two groups were distinguished by their attitude towards military participation in the cabinet, an issue that reached prominence during the October strike. Underlying all attitudes was the appreciation that the armed forces meant, above all, control and stability. Whether the armed forces were rightest or leftist in political leaning was of lesser importance: the military were not against the revolutionary process per se, as seen in their refusal to stop Allende from coming to power. But they were concerned that the process be orderly: the maintenance of public order, the avoidance of spontaneity or political romanticism in any form. The military were, like the opposition, particularly disaffected with the activities of the far Left. These, plus the increasing violence between government and opposition supporters, involved the military in three ways.

Firstly, the tomas of farms, land, housing and factories were anathema to the military's way of thinking. Nor did it appreciate lyrical expressions of the revolution. After the coup, the revolutionary murals painted by the Ramona Parra brigade and others were destroyed, the young folksinger Victor Jara was beaten

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24. see Nunn, 272-3.

to death, and books were burnt, including Pablo Neruda's papers.

Secondly, the army and the carabineros were called on to control physically the street clashes that began with the "March of the Empty Pots" and spread during 1972. The officers received direct administrative responsibilities whenever the president declared a "state of emergency" in a province, as he did more and more frequently. During the October strike, most of the country was under military control.

Thirdly, the armed forces' monopoly of arms was threatened by the proliferation of violent tactics by the political extremes. Then, as now, it was difficult to distinguish the reality from the rhetoric and rumour, with regard to the extent of private arming in Chile. Dudley Seers wrote in 1972,

> On the face of it, the situation seems desperate, and Santiago is buzzing with rumours - of householders in the upper-class suburbs arming themselves, of MIR accumulating stocks of arms, of vigilante groups in the south, of the armed forces standing by.[25]

This belonged partly to the politics of brinkmanship, for as Seers remarked, few people had anything to gain from a confrontation. Whatever the extent to which it was real, the image of massive arming among Chileans undoubtedly concerned the military. Nor was Allende helped by the frequent statements emanating from the revolutionary Left of the need to prepare militarily for the inevitable confrontation. The Libro Blanco, which the military junta published to justify the September 1973 coup, was overwhelmingly concerned with revelations of the acquisitions of weapons by

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25. D. Seers, 'Chile: is the road to Socialism blocked?' in The World Today, May 1972, 207.

the Left and of plans for armed defence in the event of a confrontation.[26] Paradoxically, it was when the Left threatened the ability of the armed forces to undertake a coup d'état against Allende, that they were most likely to provoke one.

The relation of the Allende government to armed leftist groups was a critical issue. The opposition charged that the government tolerated leftist violence, and used this as grounds for the impeachment of interior ministers José Tohá and Hernán del Canto. An incident with great political implications occurred in March 1972 when thirteen large wooden crates imported from Cuba were cleared through customs on the order of the head of Investigaciones and a close friend of Allende, Eduardo Paredes. The government described the contents as "works of art", but the Libro Blanco contained inventories and photographs of armaments found in Allende's Santiago residence, Tomas Moro, after the coup.[27] The episode of los bultos cubanos was important for showing that some sections of the Popular Unity government were actively preparing for an armed confrontation, and that this was happening with the knowledge of Allende himself. The incident received much attention and contributed to the impeachment of Hernán del Canto on a charge of customs violation.

Other indications of Allende's personal ambivalence regarding revolutionary violence were his continued ties with Castro, a nephew who was a MIR leader and a daughter married to an official in the Cuban secret police. A focus of military antipathy was the group

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26. see Military Junta, Libro Blanco del Cambio de Gobierno en Chile, Santiago 1973, passim.

27. see Ibid., 103-8; H. Millas, Anatomia de un fracaso, Santiago 1973, 100-5.

of personal bodyguards (GAP, Grupo de Amigos Personales), comprised of young Socialist and MIR militants, which Allende formed in the tense months before Congress ratified his election in 1970.

Military fears of institutional disunity were also encouraged by rightist claims, voiced through El Mercurio, that the Communist party was infiltrating young Marxists into the armed forces.[28]

Allende in fact sought military involvement in his cabinet before the October strike. In April 1972 Allende appointed a military engineer, General Pedro Palacios, as mining minister after the defection of the Radical Left party from the government. The appointment was part of Allende's aim "to incorporate the armed forces into the country's process of development in its economic, technical, scientific and cultural aspects", but it was also related to his increasing loss of middle-class support.[29] Again in the cabinet reshuffle of June it was reported that the army commander-in-chief rejected an offer by Allende of five cabinet posts, indicating military reluctance to participate actively in the government at that stage.[30]

By the time of the October strike, the opposition was pushing for military participation, both to guarantee the fairness of the forthcoming March congressional elections and to ensure that the government would not take reprisal action against strikers. In general terms they believed that military participation would bring a measure of order and restraint to government programmes and would

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28. L.A. Sobel (ed.), Chile and Allende, New York 1974, 79.
29. Ibid., 82.
30. Economist, 17 June, 1972, 18-9.

pressure the government to control the far Left more actively.

The same belief coloured the attitudes of the UP parties, resulting in the apparent reversal of their previous positions. The left-wing of Popular Unity - the Socialist party and MAPU - and the MIR opposed military involvement, which they felt would put a brake on the revolutionary process and hold back the momentum of "popular power", which the October strike had stimulated. Their uncompromising view of the middle class also affected their view of the military. Socialist Robinson Rojas, for example, was critical of Allende's conciliatory approach toward the armed forces, which he condemned as the "armed bourgeois referee". In an article which the PS magazine Causa ML initially rejected for publication because it would "damage the Left image of Compañero Allende", Rojas argued that the armed forces had not intervened only because Allende had not yet broken with bourgeois institutionality.[31]

The Communist party, on the other hand, had the same concern as the armed forces for the ordering of the revolutionary process and the avoidance of spontaneous revolutionary tactics. Allegedly behind the June offer of cabinet posts to the military, the PC was afraid both of being outflanked on the left and of the possibility of civil war or a coup.

The extreme social tensions generated by the October strike encouraged both Allende to go against the wishes of his left-wing and the military constitutionalists to reverse their previous decision, with the inclusion of General Prats, Rear Admiral Ismael

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31. see Rojas in Johnson (ed.), 310-322.

Huerta and General Claudio Sepúlveda in the November cabinet.

> Formal military involvement in the Allende government meant that the effective military veto the military already exercised in certain policy areas - military aid from the United States, border disputes with Argentina, military pay and perquisites - now extended much more broadly to issues of law and order, including the legality of the methods adopted for the extension of state control over the economy. It also meant that the military services became collectively responsible for approving and implementing government policy, thus abandoning the fiction of their "nonpolitical" character.[32]

Its significance was underlined a month later when during an overseas trip Allende left Interior Minister Prats as vice-president and in political charge of the nation.

The October strike also encouraged Allende to accept an Arms Control Law, despite strong opposition from the Socialist party, because it was supported by the military. The bill aimed at strict regulation of the possession of arms, giving the armed forces responsibility to enforce the bill.[33] The passing of the Arms Control Law and military participation in the cabinet suggested that the veto power of the UP left-wing over Allende was becoming less effective and that the armed forces, not the militant working class, were coming to occupy a position of dual authority.

But political involvement, while bringing a short-term easing of tension, only encouraged the divisions developing within the military, ultimately strengthening the position of the institutionalists at the expense of the constitutionalist officers who supported participation. As the military was sucked into the

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32. Sigmund, 188.

33. see Ibid., 183-4.

daily business of administration, it became increasingly identified with a highly controversial government. Prats, in particular, was dubbed the "Red General" by the Right, and was charged with giving speeches in the barracks supporting the UP government.

Political involvement also encouraged corporate ideological tendencies reflecting the political implications of the differences within the armed forces. On the one hand, the constitutionalists, with Prats as their spokesman, became allied to the working class organisations. The November 1972 cabinet included not only the three officers, but also long-time CUT President Luis Figueroa and Secretary-General Hernán del Canto, giving the cabinet a "national unity" profile. Prats emerged as a caudillo-like figure at this stage, established nationally as a political figure, the voice of the army, urging national unity and supervising the congressional elections: the popular image of an impartial nationalist.[34] Prats may also have had political ambitions of his own.

On the other hand, the institutionalists tended to align with the gremios, which had risen to a position of independent political strength with the nationwide strike. These links were not manifest until the military junta took over in late 1973. Significantly, both the constitutionalists and the institutionalists bypassed the political parties of the Left and Right, and sought their connections with mass social groups, thus avoiding a strictly "political" image and suggesting an element of anti-parliamentarionism.

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34. see Nunn, 272-3, 277-9.

However, military involvement did not resolve the political impasse that resulted from the October strike. From then until March the civil-military cabinet presided over a period of stalemate and armed truce, as political activity was directed toward the March 4 congressional elections. But this situation was superficial, as both before and after March government policy showed little coherence, and as soon as the military left the cabinet, political and social tensions rapidly escalated.

The Allende government was increasingly seen to be a government without power: characterized by contradictory initiatives, some moving to the left, others to the right, and withdrawn when they encountered opposition. On January 20 Allende admitted to many mistakes since taking power, in agricultural and international policies, and in the failure to dismiss Congress and call a plebiscite soon after he was elected. His young minister of agriculture, Socialist Rolando Calderón, admitted the seriousness of the food problem, which was to cost the country over $600 million in food imports in 1973.[35]

Three major government initiatives were either withdrawn or weakened, thereby increasing political opposition to the government without achieving any benefits. A proposal presented in January 1973 by Economy Minister Orlando Millas called for a re-examination of the industries within the Social Area, with the implication that many of the firms requisitioned during the October strike might be returned to their former owners. The Millas Plan was strongly and publicly criticized by the cordones and the Socialist party, which were urging a rapid expansion of state control over industry. The left-wing

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35. Sobel (ed.), 110; Sigmund 196.

interpreted it as an attempt to pull back in order to reach a conciliatory position toward the Christian Democrats, and it was eventually shelved.

Also in January the minister of finance, Fernando Flores, announced a new distribution system for basic foods, to overcome the problems of shortages and extensive black marketing. A family quota was to be established covering 30 essential food items, which the government-created supply and price committees (JAPs, Juntas de abastecimiento y precios) would enforce and help distribute. The opposition exaggerated the plan as a rationing system which would bring political control through the stomach, because most of the JAP committees were dominated by the Marxist parties. Criticism was only deflated when air force General Alberto Bachelet was named to head the new National Distribution Secretariat (DINAC), thus guaranteeing impartiality under the new measures.[36]

Shortly after the March elections, an ill-timed report proposing a major reorganization of the educational curriculum in line with "the values of socialist humanism" was released. The ENU school reform provoked a broad base of protest, from the opposition, the Catholic Church, the military, and high school students, with the charge that it would deliver education to a partisan ideology and end pluralism in Chilean education. On April 13, after a demonstration by the Christian Democrat-controlled Secondary School Students Federation in Santiago was broken up by the police, Education Minister Jorge Tapia announced that the plan would be postponed.[37]

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36. on the Millas and Flores plans, see Sigmund, 195-6, 197; B. Stallings, Class Conflict and Economic Development in Chile, 1958-1973, Stanford 1978, 144-5.

37. see Sigmund, 202-4; Sobel (ed.), 123-4.

Two international overtures also had mixed results from the Chilean government. In late 1972 Allende visited Mexico, the United Nations, the Soviet Union and Cuba, with stopovers in Peru, Algeria and Venezuela. He received wide support for his government's nationalization of natural resources and denunciation of the international economic pressure against Chile. Speaking at the United Nations on December 4, the Chilean president centred his criticism on the U.S. based corporations ITT and Kennecott. He also accused the United States of promoting an economic blockade that had affected his country's ability to secure equipment, spare parts, food and medicine.

But Allende was not so successful in his economic purpose, primarily the expansion of Soviet assistance. The Russians had promised Chile $293 million of aid in the preceding two years, and to purchase copper and copper products from Chile. But they extended few extra credits, revealing their unwillingness to underwrite the Marxist government in Chile as they had Castro's Cuba, reportedly at the cost of $1 million a day. Moscow did offer $50 million in low interest credits to buy Soviet military equipment, but Allende refused this since the Chilean armed forces preferred to obtain new equipment from the United States.[38]

Also in December the U.S. and Chilean governments held talks on their continuing disputes, including Chilean nationalization of U.S. property, Chile's $1.7 billion debt to the U.S., and Washington's obstruction of international credits. These problems

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38. see Sigmund, 191-5; Sobel (ed.), 101-2. On Chilean-Soviet relations under Allende, see J.L. Nogee and J.W. Sloan, 'Allende's Chile and the Soviet Union' in Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs, Aug. 1979, 339-68.

were given greater urgency when Chile suspended payments to the World Bank on January 1, 1973. A second round of negotiations was held in March, but ended in an impasse.

For the opposition the March congressional elections were the last chance for three years to obstruct Allende electorally. The National party talked of a two-thirds majority, by which it intended to impeach the president. The more rational Christian Democrats, realising that two-thirds was unlikely since only half of the Senate seats were to be contested, saw the elections as a plebiscite on the Allende government. Allende hoped to increase on his presidential vote, and talked of gaining 40 per cent.[39]

The campaign was acrimonious, especially in Santiago, where four of the senatorial candidates were Eduardo Frei, Sergio Onofre Jarpa (leader of the National party), respected Communist Volodia Teitelboim, and the Socialist leader Carlos Altamirano. Another source of tension was that the elections were being contested on a straight government-opposition basis. The UP El Arrayan conference in early 1972 had recommended that coalitions be allowed to contest the congressional elections, resulting in the formation of two federations: the Popular Unity federation (the Communist and Socialist parties, MAPU, the Radical party, The Christian Left and API), and the Confederacion Democratica or CODE (the Christian Democrat and National parties, the Radical Democrats and the Left Radicals). The U.S. 40 committee approved nearly $1.5 million to support opposition political parties and private sector organisations

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39. on the 1973 congressional elections, see A. Angell, 'Congressional elections in Chile' in The World Today, April 1973, 135-8; Latin America, 2 Feb., 1973, 37-8; Sigmund, 196-201.

in anticipation of the March elections, in October 1972, and a further $200,000 in February 1973.[40]

The results were most remarkable for the stability they recorded in the Chilean electorate, corresponding closely to the figures for the 1969 congressional elections. The government gained almost 44 per cent of the vote, the opposition won 55.7 per cent. In terms of seats, Popular Unity gained two senate seats and six in the Chamber of Deputies, leaving the opposition with 30 out of 50 in the Senate and 87 out of 150 in the Chamber.

Generally the four main parties (PDC, PN, PS, PC) gained at the expense of the smaller parties. The Radicals, divided into three groups, lost 17 seats in the lower house, while the Left Christians were reduced from 9 deputies to one. Frei's lead in the Santiago race confirmed his position as the leading contender for the opposition nomination in 1976, but Teitelboim and Altamirano also finished strongly. The estimated 700,000 new voters, since 18 year olds and illiterates were enfranchised in 1970, probably benefitted the government.

The unexpected good showing of the UP coalition indicated primarily that working class support for the Left remained loyal. The deteriorating economy had disaffected the Chilean middle class, but hardship was nothing new to the working class. If the shortage of beef cut into the consumption habits of the middle class, the working class now had money to buy it when available. From July 1972 to July 1973 the amount of money in the private sector increased about 300 per cent; despite the 70 per cent increase in the value of

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40. U.S. Senate Select Committee, 60.

imports, the main factor in the inflation rate estimated at 300 per cent by the middle of 1973 was excessive internal demand.[41]

Alan Angell noted another kind of stability in the March elections.

> If many things are greatly changed in Allende's Chile, one characteristic of the political situation remains constant - no one admits to defeat in elections, and anyone with the slightest credible claim pronounces himself the victor.[42]

The March elections proved inconclusive regarding the political stalemate, encouraging both Allende and the opposition not to compromise. Pointing to the fact that no previous president had increased his support in mid-term elections, Allende named an all-civilian cabinet, although it was not clear whether this reflected more his or the military's wishes. Within UP he helped strengthen the position of the moderates: in the cabinet, in MAPU and the Socialist party, and in launching Clodomiro Almeyda as a potential successor. This was at the cost of further distancing the radical Left, which suspected the Communist party of seeking a predominance of moderates in UP.[43]

The opposition hardened in attitude towards Allende. Within the Christian Democrat party the right-wing established its predominance when in May Patricio Aylwin, a close associate of Frei, replaced the moderate Renán Fuentealba as president of the party. In the

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41. figures from ECLA, Economic Survey of Latin America, 1973, New York 1975, 164-6.

42. Angell, 135.

43. Rojas, The Murder of Allende, 128; Stallings, 146; Latin America, 1 June, 1973, 174-5.

same month Frei himself, who had excluded all possibility of collaboration with the Allende government, was elected president of the Senate, thus reversing the positions he and Allende had held in 1967.[44]

Political tension heightened in the months April-June as the Allende government faced increasing political opposition, labour strikes and unrest, and an escalation of extremist violence. The related nationalization and constitutional issues re-emerged when the government expropriated another 41 companies by means of a "decree of insistence", which all members of the cabinet signed in order to overrule the courts and controller-general. Following this the PDC and PN threatened to impeach the entire cabinet, also a reaction to Allende's minister reshuffling method of avoiding impeachments. In June Allende received a setback when the constitutional tribunal, to which he had submitted the constitutional issue, refused to pronounce on the dispute.

In April El Teniente miners initiated a strike over wage claims, being joined by the miners at Chuquicamatá on June 1. The strike reflected the miners' concern at the erosion of their position as the highest paid workers in Chile. They were supported by the opposition parties, the gremios, and farmers in the south, who sent food to the striking families. The strike was accompanied by much violence, both in the northern mining towns and in Santiago, where it erupted late in June as strikers came to the capital. On June 6 the government suspended copper shipments because of the strike, at a time when copper prices were rising on the world market

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44. Latin America, 6 April, 1973, 106; 1 June, 1973, 176.

(70 per cent in 1973). Both the Communist and Socialist parties charged Allende with being too lenient with the miners, intervening when he proposed to talk with the strike leaders. "The length of the strike demonstrated both Allende's determination to hold down soaring wages and the loss of confidence in his government, at least by the best-paid workers.[45]

The rise in labour unrest was paralleled by an increase in activity by the political extremes. The MIR was calling for the formation of armed worker groups, and denounced government repression when police dispersed MIR assaults on private and state food distributors. The right-wing Patria y Libertad also stepped up a campaign of subversion designed to overthrow the government. Patria y Libertad was growing openly into a quasi-fascist organization, with many links with the gremios: one leader, Benjamin Matte, for example, was a former president of the agricultural association, SNA.

Members of Patria y Libertad were also suspected of involvement in an abortive military coup led by Colonel Souper of the Second Armoured Regiment on June 29, the climax to three months of growing tension. Since the military had left the cabinet, there had been a growing ambivalence in their position. While General Prats was travelling overseas, differences of opinion within the military were becoming increasingly public. It was reported that Allende sought military participation to end the copper strike as he had done in November 1972, but that he was not prepared to accept the abandonment of his programme for rapid socialization as the military demanded.[46]

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45. Sigmund, 210.

46. Sobel (ed.), 127-8.

The June 29 episode was in fact a putsch rather than a coup d'état, representing a fairly spontaneous decision to act, with little organization or planning. Returning to the barracks from the presidential palace, which the presidential guard had defended, one tank had to stop at a service station for gasoline on the way. The rebellion was put down by the armed forces itself led personally by Prats, who emerged as something of a national hero. It was later clear that only the one regiment had rebelled, although five Patria y Libertad leaders including Pablo Rodriguez subsequently took refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy, suggesting their complicity.

One foreign report commented on the episode,

> It is obvious that the great hope of those who want Allende out of office - the support of the armed forces - has been removed. The events of last Friday demonstrated that the armed forces and police want to maintain their tradition, interrupted for the first time in 42 years last week, of non-intervention in politics.[47]

In retrospect, the lack of military support for the rebellion represented a more ironic truth. A group of officers had begun, but not yet completed, plans for a military intervention. They helped suppress the June 29 episode not because of its aim, but because it was "adventurist" and to keep their own efforts alive.

However, even the golpistas (officers planning a coup) were reluctant to act militarily before all other means of overthrowing Allende were exhausted. The congressional elections were critical for confirming to the military that Allende could not be ousted by democratic means. General Arellano, a member of the clandestine group planning the coup which took place in September, said in February 1974, "We all wanted a democratic way out. There wasn't.

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47. Latin America, 6 July, 1973, 212.

It was a tremendously difficult decision." But, "we were the army that wielded the sword. We were the last card Chile had to play."[48]

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48. quoted by J.E. Garcés, 'World Equilibrium, Crisis and Militarization of Chile' in Journal of Peace Research, II 1974, 93 n.

CHAPTER VII

THE 1973 COUP
OVERTHROW OF ALLENDE

The failed putsch of June 1973 (the tancazo) provided a brief respite for the Allende government, but it soon became apparent that there was little changed in the political stalemate. More importantly, the rebel military action exposed the internal disunity that threatened to submerge the armed forces as an institution in the bitter political contest. In the space of two months the military's need to preserve itself and its interpretation of the solution to the Chilean crisis merged into the united military action which overthrew the Popular Unity government.

In the short term, Allende benefitted from the military rebellion, which provoked claims that he had engineered it himself. Expression of an upsurge of civilian solidarity proved to be illusory however, when Allende attempted to capitalize on it. On the grounds that the country was on the brink of civil war Allende sought a three month "state of siege" giving the President wider powers than those under a "state of emergency", but the bill was blocked by Congress.

More significantly, during the military uprising the national trade union leadership called on workers to occupy factories; in a single stroke government control of companies nearly doubled. The CUT directive was related more to a fear of being outflanked on the left by the developing cordones industriales than to the June 29 putsch. The traditional trade union was concerned to bring the mobilization known as "popular power" under its direction rather than allow the creation of a parallel working class organization. This also reflected the conflict between the Communist party, which

retained its traditional control of the CUT, and the Socialist party and MIR, which were encouraging the cordones industriales.

Following the suppression of the military revolt, but not necessarily a direct result of it, was a resolution of the 74 day copper strike at El Teniente. In his May 21 message to Congress Allende criticized the "economist" political consciousness of some workers, referring specifically to the copper miners. "The workers must make a decision: they must say whether we continue with an economistic policy whose symbol is El Teniente or if we go towards the sacrifice of having less money for the sake of greater progress and more prosperous development."[1] He felt personally the failure of some sectors of the working class to support him, as indicated by petulant remarks he made threatening to leave office if the copper strike continued.[2]

It was clear after the tancazo that the Allende government had lost control of the country: the political and economic battles were lost long before the final military confrontation.

On July 26 the truckers began a second national strike, which their leader León Vilarín made it transparently clear was political in intent, that is, the downfall of the Allende government. Vilarín had acquired importance as a political figure in his own right, representing the independent political strength of the gremios. According to one report, "Sr. Vilarín clearly sees himself as a catalyst in a process of confrontation that will either bring the government down or force Dr Allende to meet the demands of the

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1. quoted by H.A. Landsberger and T. McDaniel, 'Hypermobilization in Chile, 1970-1973' in World Politics, July 1976, 524.

2. Latin America, 27 April, 1973, 133.

opposition majority in congress."[3]

The Christian Democrat leaders were playing a dual role, torn between their commitment to constitutional democracy and the obsession of the predominant right-wing with the Marxist threat. Calling for a democratic solution to the political crisis, they simultaneously supported the strikes and demonstrations aimed at total capitulation by the government. On August 27 the Chamber of Deputies passed a motion censuring the government for constant violations of the Constitution. While the resolution did not explicitly call for a coup, it called on the armed forces to ensure the legality of government actions, thereby implicitly inviting a military solution. In a strong reply Allende accused the opposition of seeking to promote a military coup by inciting the armed forces to disobey the civil authorities.[4]

Allende was also playing a dual role, one which stemmed from the paradoxes in his own personality and in the nature of the Chilean Left. Hence his position on issues such as "popular power" and conciliation with the middle class appeared ambiguous, leaving him open to the charge of lack of direction by both the Right and the radical Left. The latter saw that the way to regain the initiative was through "popular power", including the arming of the workers. The opposition insisted that a return to "normality" must begin with the government showing a commitment to peaceful means by disarming the radical Left and controlling workers' seizures. But "popular power" presented an embryonic form of the new revolutionary socialism which Allende could not suppress without appearing to

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3. Economist, 18 Aug., 1973, 34.

4. see L.A. Sobel (ed.), Chile and Allende, New York 1974, 138-9; P.E. Sigmund, The Overthrow of Allende, Pittsburgh 1977, 232-3.

compromise his socialist beliefs, while democracy represented a personal commitment and source of strength. Politically Allende was caught also: to break openly with the democratic system would unleash the opposition and the armed forces, while the suppression of the radical Left would cost Allende much of his political support. Torn between the future and the past, Allende clung to the belief in a democratic road to socialism that by 1973 was illusory in Chile.

By May 21, when the President gave his annual speech to Congress, he could offer no way out of the current political impasse. In contrast to his previous two reports, the 1973 message, symbolically titled "For democracy and the revolution, against civil war", lacked decisiveness and the promise of action.[5] After the coup his widow, Hortensia Bussi de Allende, spoke of the change she experienced in her husband.

> He was always tense and worried, he certainly lost the calm and imperturbability of former times... His sense of humour gradually became more polemical. Replies which were once subtle and ironical now became curt and dry.[6]

Stanley Plastrick made another assessment of Allende during his last year in office:

> Allende himself - caught up in this turmoil, engulfed by waves of clashing rhetoric, more and more cut off from his own party - appeared to lose control of the machinery of government. His public posture grew uneasy, oscillating between extremes of language... These zig-zags, signs of desperation and loss of nerve, ended with Allende alone in his palace, slaughtered by the army.[7]

The president's perception and approach to reality was made no easier by the dreamlike sequence of events in the last few months

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5. see S. Allende, Mensaje presidente allende ante congreso pleno: 21/mayo '73, Santiago 1973, vii-xxxv.

6. G. Borovik (comp.), The Tragedy of Chile, Moscow 1974, 20.

7. S. Plastrik, 'A First Word on the Chilean Tragedy' in Dissent, Winter 1974, 10.

of the Popular Unity government. There was an increasing sense of inevitability, of an irreversible dialectic, and of an impending confrontation. As early as May 1973 the British newsletter Latin America observed that, "In the continuing crisis in Chile, both government and opposition seem like helpless spectators waiting for something to break."[8]

Not only were they spectators, but the intense politicization of Chileans made them all actors integral to the drama. Each event had a political charge and was interpreted by geometrically opposed points of view. The assassination of Allende's naval aide, Captain Arturo Araya, by unknown gunmen at his home in Santiago, was symptomatic: government and opposition presses each presented evidence that extremists from the other side were responsible for the killing. In a letter to General Carlos Prats a few days before the September coup, Radomiro Tomic, one of those whose voices of conciliation and moderation were drowned, wrote,

> As in the tragedies of Greek classical theatre, all know what will happen, all do not wish it to occur, but each one does precisely what is necessary to provoke the unfortunate outcome everyone pretends to avoid."[9]

In this atmosphere talks held between Allende and Patricio Aylwin, the hard-line president of the PDC, to attempt to resolve differences could be little more than ritual. The negotiations covered four principal points: disarmament of paramilitary groups, presidential promulgation of the Christian Democrat bill defining the three areas of the economy, return of the industries occupied on June 29, and military participation in the cabinet. Allende revealed

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8. Latin America, 11 May, 1973, 145.

9. quoted by A. and J.S. Valenzuela (eds.), Chile: Politics and Society, New Brunswick 1976, vii.

that he was prepared to compromise on some issues, but the parties on both sides were unwilling to renounce any political advantage they had acquired.[10] The failure of the dialogue demonstrated how the demands of maintaining internal political unity in a competitive multi-party system could encourage intransigence rather than conciliation.

The economy was also dominated by political factors. The ECLA report on Chile in 1973 declared that the economy was influenced by "transcendental political and social developments".[11] De Vylder suggests also that "while stagnation of output was what could be expected from a 'strictly economic' point of view, the decline that eventually took place must be attributed to political factors alone."[12] (original emphasis)

Furthermore, most of the features of the economic crisis in 1973, such as inflation, shortages, balance of payments problems and fiscal deficits, were not introduced by the Allende government but had plagued successive Chilean governments for decades. The policies of the Allende government dramatically accentuated these recurrent problems. De Vylder cites UP's short-term economic policy as an example of policy which created more problems than it solved. Chile's productive capacity remained unable to meet all the demands that economic policies, and most notably those of Popular Unity, required it to meet.[13]

One traditional feature of the Chilean economy which returned was the reliance on a single export commodity, which Popular Unity saw as an aspect of "periphery capitalism" and had sought to diminish.

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10. see Sigmund, 223-5.
11. Economic Commission for Latin America, Economic Survey of Latin America, 1973, New York 1975, 162.
12. S. de Vylder, Allende's Chile, New York 1976, 107.
13. Ibid., 208-220.

In 1973 the share of copper in the total exports increased from 71.7 per cent to 82.2 per cent. This was related to domestic production problems, a decrease in gross fixed investment by 14.3 per cent, as well as a 70 per cent rise in the world price of copper.[14]

In the two months from the tancazo to the September coup Allende had to reorganize his cabinet three times. Controversy no longer centred on the balance of the UP parties or of moderates and radicals, but on the inclusion of the armed forces. After the June putsch Allende asked officers to join his cabinet, but they set unacceptable conditions for their participation, amounting to military control of the Popular Unity government.[15] Two weeks into the second truckers' strike however, the economic chaos and political violence accompanying the strike, and related right-wing terrorism and sabotage, forced Allende to seek military presence in a National Security cabinet. The military officers included were the four service chiefs: Prats as defence minister, Admiral Raúl Montero as finance minister, air force commander General César Ruiz as transport minister, and as such responsible for finding a solution to the truckers' strike, and police chief General José Maria Sepúlveda in the less important lands and colonization ministry.

But military participation did not bring about a resolution of the crisis as it had in November 1972, since this time the armed

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14. figures from ECLA, Economic Survey of Latin America, 1973, 162-8. Similarly in the Cuban Revolution, after an early attempt at rapid industrialization and development of non-traditional exports, the Castro government returned to a reliance on sugar exports, to the degree that in 1970 the drive towards a 10 million ton harvest dominated Cuban affairs. But Castro inherited a far less developed industrial infrastructure than did Allende.

15. see F.M. Nunn, The Military in Chilean History, Albuquerque 1976, 284; Sobel (ed.), 131-2.

forces themselves were deeply divided over involvement in the Allende government. Involvement met with criticism from the Right, which wanted the military to exercise far greater control over the Allende government, and from the radical Left, which saw the armed forces as an obstacle to the revolution.

Of greatest direct concern to the armed forces was the arms issue. After the June putsch, and with pressure from the congressional opposition, the army began seriously to enforce the Arms Control Law, which allowed it to conduct raids in search of weapons without requiring authorization from the government. In reality, the army focused mainly on the Left, causing bitterness among Allende's left-wing supporters who demanded the immediate repeal of the law. The law served the armed forces in two ways. Firstly, the genuine search for arms revealed many caches of weapons, intensifying military fear of an armed working class. Secondly, the law allowed less scrupulous officers to test their soldiers in confrontations with the working class and also to terrorize the workers.[16]

Thus the prerequisites for a military coup in Chile existed: wide popular support and implicit congressional encouragement for military action, the concern for national and internal "security" as a result of economic and political chaos and subversion, the threat to the armed forces as an institution, and general antipathy to the anarchic situation. Moreover, the Brazilian, Peruvian, Bolivian and Uruguayan militaries had all presented examples of military solutions to national crises, thus putting pressure

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16. I. Roxborough et al., Chile: The State and Revolution, U.S.A. 1977, 197-8, 201-3, contains instances of military intimidation of the working class.

on the Chilean officers to act similarly. In August and early September an accumulation of precipitants made some form of military action inevitable.

In August the navy accused Altamirano of the PS, Oscar Garretón of MAPU and Miguel Enriquez of the MIR of sponsoring a leftist revolt of sailors at Valparaiso, requesting that the congressional immunity of Altamirano and Garretón be lifted. Amid reports of the torture of sailors, the UP executive committee later issued a statement, not supported by the Allende government, claiming that the sailors had refused to obey orders, promoting a naval coup.[17] That self-proclaimed Marxists were openly trying to infiltrate the armed forces and to subvert military discipline could only provoke counter-revolution.

Meanwhile, Allende himself became involved in a dispute with the officers of the air force. On August 18 General Ruiz resigned from the cabinet on the grounds that he had not been given sufficient powers to end the truckers' strike. Allende also dismissed him as air force commander, at which Ruiz protested. Earlier in the month Allende had also retired the air force generals who were second and fourth in seniority. A large group of officers threatened to take action if Ruiz was not reinstated as air force commander, but finally allowed Allende's new appointee, General Gustavo Leigh, to take command.

Allende's action, like that of the radical Left, seemed to antagonize the service officers unnecessarily. Other rumours circulated of an impending purge of senior officers. These were related to the visit of two leading Cubans, Vice-President Carlos

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17. see Sobel (ed.), 134-140.

Rafael Rodriguez, known to have Soviet connections, and the head of the Cuban secret police, Manuel Pineiro, carrying a letter from Fidel Castro. The visit increased military suspicion of Cuban activities in Chile.[18]

On August 22, after a noisy demonstration by the wives of army officers outside his home and a subsequent hasty meeting of generals, Prats announced his resignation as both defence minister and army commander, thus depriving Allende of his most crucial ally in the past year. Prats declared he had resigned to avoid a split in the army and "so as not to serve as a pretext for those who seek to overthrow the constitutional government".[19] This indicated not only the deep divisions within the armed forces, but also that the constitutionalists had lost their control over the military. Prats, caught between the open hostility of the Right and the suspicions of the extreme Left, had lost the confidence of a majority of officers. His resignation left of the military members of the cabinet only Admiral Montero, who in the following week was pressured into retiring by his fellow navy officers led by second-in-command Admiral José Merino. The discrediting of the constitutionalist officers, and in particular Prat's resignation, opened the doors to the coup.

The armed forces moved on Monday, September 11, beginning with

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18. Economist, 25 Aug. 1973, 38; 1 Sept, 1973, 19. Military Junta, Libro Blanco, Santiago 1973, 101-2, contains a handwritten facsimile of the Castro letter. After the coup Admiral Huerta, foreign minister for the junta, read the letter to the U.N. General Assembly; see IDOC, L. Birns (ed.), Chile, New York Dec 1973, 16-22.

19. quoted by Sigmund, 231.

Empty Pots" and the visit of Fidel Castro, he was the army garrison commander in Santiago, thereby responsible for implementing the "state of emergency" in the capital. Later, as chief of general staff, he became second-in-command behind Prats. With the latter committed to a constitutionalist position and closely identified with the Allende government, the support of Pinochet became crucial to the coup planners if they were not to go over the heads of the two most senior army men. At the generals' conclave that voted 12 to 6 against Prats, Pinochet supported his commander, but as the succeeding army chief would "reflect the predominant tendency in the high command which is clearly opposed to giving political support to the Unidad Popular".[21]

However, in 1974 Pinochet stated that on April 13, 1972, the general staff discussed the political situation and concluded that the "insuperable conflict between the executive and legislature will be without a constitutional solution." In the same year he said that he and seven other officers had signed a document on March 20, 1973, declaring that a constitutional solution was now impossible.[22] Rojas cites a meeting on June 30 at which Pinochet was invited to join the conspiracy, becoming the leader of the operation.[23] Although inconsistent with each other, these reports suggest that Pinochet was committed to a military solution before he supported Prats at the generals' meeting. Furthermore, although after the coup Pinochet spoke of a restoration of constitutionalism, placing him as a moderate within the junta, he subsequently consolidated his

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21. quoted by Sigmund, 231.

22. Ibid., 170, 312 n.1.

23. R. Rojas, The Murder of Allende, New York 1976, 167-8.

a revolt by the navy at Valparaiso. Allende went to the Moneda Palace to learn of the extent of the rebellion. In the event of a coup, many people expected the armed forces to split. Crucial to their unity was the position of the army, since the navy and air force had already made clear their opposition to the UP government. If the army supported President Allende, there might be a repeat of the bitter 1891 civil war, when the army and navy clashed over the dispute between President Balmaceda and the parliamentary opposition. But the armed forces functioned efficiently and in united fashion, with all four services being represented in the military junta that was created.

In particular, the role of General Augusto Pinochet, the new army commander succeeding Prats, closely resembled that of the "swing man", although his own statements after the coup suggested a more duplicitous role. The "swing man", because of his personal influence within the armed forces, prestige among the public or his critical position in the command structure of the armed forces, provides the critical margin of support for the coup conspiracy. Often concerned to avoid conflict within the armed forces, which may result in a civil war, he encourages unity and provides leadership during the coup.[20]

By reputation General Pinochet followed in the constitutionalist tradition of Schneider and Prats. However he was also involved in events which politicized the military generally. During the first wave of street violence in late 1971 surrounding the "March of the

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20. M.C. Needler, 'Political Development and Military Intervention in Latin America' in A. von Lazar and R.R. Kaufman (eds.), Reform and Revolution, Boston 1969, 229-248, develops the theory of the "swing man".

personal position as President and indicated that democracy would remain "in recess" for an extended period. In this he differed from the "swing man" who, because he is the latest adherent to the conspiracy, is theoretically least committed to the coup and favours an early return to civilian constitutionalism.

Another reason for the military's outward solidarity emerged after the coup with reports of the suppression within the armed forces of officers and troops thought to be sympathetic to Popular Unity.[24] This internal war included the arrest of officers, such as Admiral Montero and air force General Bachelet, and even shootings on the night before the coup. One school of carabinero NCOs in Santiago resisted for three days before being wiped out. General Prats, who it was thought might lead a force against the golpistas, was allowed to slip over into Argentina, where he was later murdered.

The failure of the armed forces to split meant that plans by the Left to resist were largely stillborn. The coup gave lie to the belief that the working class had the military capability to confront the armed forces. Apart from armed resistance at the presidential palace, a few factories (notably the Sumar factory), the Technical University in Santiago, and some guerrilla activity in the southern provinces, the armed forces did not meet the confrontation they expected. Even after a full month of repression, Frei told Spanish journalists that before the coup "the Chilean Marxists disposed of arms superior in number and quality to those held by the armed

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24. see Latin America, 9 Nov, 1973, 356-8; G. Garcia Marquez, 'Why Allende Had to Die' in New Statesman, 15 Mar, 1974, 358.

forces."[25] The opposition leaders and El Mercurio continued to broadcast uncritically the claims made by the armed forces to justify the continued repression.

The scale and brutality of military repression derived from a number of factors. First, there was the potential brutality of any military and in particular the professionalism of the Chilean armed forces, hence the desire to do the job properly. When asked why so many people died in the relatively harmless June putsch, General Pinochet replied, "When the army comes out, it is to kill."[26]

Second, the armed forces were acting from a position of insecurity, because of both their uneasy ideological stance and doubt as to internal unity. The fascism with which the military junta was characterized was more an "ideological cover", designed to conceal and replace the technocrat - military current that the Chilean military did not have.[27] The divisions within the armed forces encouraged a rapid, brutal action to weld them together again.

Third, the sense of prevailing anarchy and heightened urgency in Chilean society, along with the rhetoric of violence emanating from both the extreme Left and Right, encouraged the military to overreact, in the belief that they would face a far greater confrontation than actually occurred.

Fourth, and most importantly, was the nature of Popular Unity

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25. quoted by L. Whitehead, 'Why Allende Fell' in The World Today, Nov 1973, 474 n.

26. quoted by Sigmund, 215.

27. see O. Paz, 'The Centurions of Santiago' in Dissent, Spring 1974, 356; R.R. Kaufman, Transitions to Stable Authoritarian - Corporate Regimes, Beverly Hills 1976, 61.

and its relation to the political system. Allende's election was not an anomaly but inherent in the Chilean democratic system. Therefore the armed forces were concerned not simply to remove the person at the head, but to dismantle the whole system that had allowed a Marxist regime to come to office. The armed forces wanted to destroy the Marxist Left, but also to depoliticize the entire country, involving the suppression of all parties and democratic liberties. Ultimately, the officers held democracy to blame for the crisis in Chile.

The Christian Democrats led by Frei, who implicitly invited a military solution, failed to appreciate the strength of this antidemocratic current. Following the coup the official party statement supported the military action to preclude an armed coup by the Left, describing "the sensation of relief with which the majority of the citizens welcomed the military uprising", but questioning the continuing repression and consolidation of a military dictatorship. A group of dissenting Christian Democrats, including former party president Fuentealba and deputy Bernardo Leighton, categorically condemned Allende's overthrow and the "antidemocratic deviation" of the country.[28] This document, plus an article by Tomic before the coup supporting General Prats, indicated the determination of the increasingly isolated moderates to be heard. The bitterly divided Christian Democrats, criticized by both the Right and Left, and under suspicion of complicity with the CIA, were discredited by the coup.

The United States was also widely held to be involved in the overthrow of Allende. One claim was that the joint U.S.-Chilean

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28. IDOC, 31-35, 29-30, contains these two documents.

naval manoeuvres off the Chilean coast were a cover for the golpe. The U.S. Senate Select Committee on covert action in Chile found no evidence that the United States was "directly" involved in the 1973 coup.

> However, the United States sought in 1970 to foment a military coup in Chile; after 1970 it adopted a policy, both overt and covert, of opposition to Allende; and it remained in intelligence contact with the Chilean military, including officers who were participating in coup plotting.[29]

Moreover, while U.S. economic aid was shut down, military aid to Chile increased under Allende: $5.7 million in 1971, $12.3 million in 1972, $15 million in 1973.[30] But arms sales in themselves do not cause military coups. Other points of contact between the U.S. and Chilean armed forces were officer training programmes in America and in the U.S. canal zone in Panama and joint manoeuvres, but the political or ideological implications of these, while existing, were indirect at most.

In sum, U.S. policy towards Allende's Chile was undoubtedly hostile. It wished to see the downfall of the UP government, and both the United States and its leading Latin American partner, Brazil, benefitted in geopolitical terms from the military coup in Chile. But the decisions for that coup were taken by the Chilean armed forces, and it was they who carried it out.

The armed forces claimed as their leading victim the president of Chile, Salvador Allende. Whether he committed suicide or was murdered as the armed forces attacked the presidential palace is

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29. U.S. Senate Select Committee, Covert action in Chile 1963-1973, Washington 1975, 2.

30. Ibid., 34.

ultimately of little significance.[31] Allende was determined to fight to the end, rather than join the ever-growing colony of exiled Latin American presidents: in the morning the generals offered him the option of exile, but he refused to take it.[32] The soldiers were equally prepared to kill him if necessary.

It is more important to ask what impelled Allende to resist to the death. Gabriel Garcia Marquez felt it was his belated disillusionment at the failure of his democratic road to socialism. "Experience taught him too late that a system cannot be changed by a government without power."[33] Allende seemed to remain optimistic of finding a way long after most other political actors had lost faith in la via chilena.

Moreover, to defend his beliefs to his death would maximize the future impact of his overthrow, for both political and personal reasons.[34] There is an essential word in Spanish, duende, which although it has no exact English equivalent, involves the transmitting of a profoundly felt emotion to an audience of strangers with the minimum of fuss and the maximum of restraint. Allende's final message to the Chilean people, delivered from the presidential palace a few hours before his death and perhaps preconceived for this moment, had duende. Calling on the people to defend themselves but

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31. see Sigmund, 244-7, for a summary of the arguments in the suicide/murder debate.

32. F. Castro and B. Allende Bussi, The highest example of heroism, La Habana 1973, 16-17, 52-3.

33. Garcia Marquez, 358.

34. see Appendix 1 for Allende's final message. "History has given me a choice. I shall sacrifice my life in loyalty to my people, in the knowledge that the seeds that we have planted in the noble consciousness of thousands of Chileans can never be prevented from bearing fruit."

to avoid needless sacrifice, he sought as throughout his three years in office to avoid a civil war, which for humanitarian reasons and from political realism he knew would be senseless.[35]

Duende is not style or ability: it is a struggle and it invokes the possibility of death. The Spanish poet Lorca wrote, "Every step that a man...takes towards the tower of his perfection is at the cost of the struggle he maintains with a duende", and "the duende likes the edge of things, the wound, and... is drawn to where forms fuse themselves in a longing greater than their visible expression". It is a matter "of real live form; of blood; of ancient culture; of creative action".[36] Allende, who spent his life seeking a nonviolent road to socialism, chose to die holding a machine gun given to him by Fidel Castro. In his final day this patrician in the workers' movement lived out the paradox of his own life and of the Chilean Left which he embodied: both belonging to a democratic system and committed to a socialist revolution. From this stemmed the final irony of a man defending the legality he had sought to transcend, while those who had declared him illegitimate in the name of that legality overthrew it violently, either by action or by sanction. Allende died defending a democracy that was not just of the "bourgeoisie" but was his own, not simply the product of a reactionary social order but the result of a long struggle for human freedoms and social justice.

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35. Both Allende's wife and his close aide Joán Garcés have testified that his chief concern was to avoid civil war; see Borovik (comp.), 20; J.E. Garcés, 'World Equilibrium, Crisis and Militarization of Chile' in Journal of Peace Research, 2, 1974, 82-3.

36. F. Garcia Lorca, 'Theory and Function of the Duende' in J.L. Gili (ed.), Lorca, Middlesex 1960, 127-139.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

With the overthrow of Allende and Popular Unity, Chile's attempt at political creativity within a democratic framework failed. The 1973 coup placed Chile, which had previously been seen as an exception to the norms of Latin American politics, within the contemporary Latin American context of a wave of military interventions and governments.

The political process in Chile in the early 1970's was extraordinarily complex - a struggle in which all aspects of Chileans' lives were integral and which demanded an intense commitment. Hence, retrospective "lessons" from the Chilean experience of a democratic road to socialism are in danger of facile answers and of underestimating the labyrinthine reality that faced Allende. Such lessons are often based on one of two assumptions concerning la via chilena; that it was doomed from the start, or that it was viable if certain events or mistakes had not happened. The question remains whether Allende's downfall could have been avoided by an alternative strategy, or, conversely, whether any of the three strategies proposed could have produced another result.

The first alternative strategy was to break with the non-violent democratic path and pursue openly revolutionary means to achieve socialism. This line was pursued by the left-wing of the PS, the MIR and militant working class groups,

especially during Allende's final months. MIR leader Miguel Enriquez believed that the coup represented the tragic end and price of "the reformist illusion" that sought an alliance with the armed forces and the middle class.[1] Socialist Carlos Altamirano also argued that an agreement with the middle class could only be sought from a position of the monopoly of power.[2] However, he denied the military junta's charge of preparations by the Left to seize total power by force, known as Plan Zeta.

> There was no such thing as a Plan 'Z'. It is quite certain that there was no plan at all. There should have been one. Not the stupid and crazy plan which the Junta is crediting us with, but a reasonable one that the circumstances demanded.[3]

Since UP had no armed forces of its own, the revolutionary strategy also called for alternative leftist political forces. The militant working class "popular power" represented an embryonic dictatorship of the proletariat, the MIR a revolutionary military dictatorship on the Cuban model.

But there was a virtual antithesis between the historical situations of the Cuban Revolution and the revolutionary process in Chile. In Cuba the charismatic, authoritarian Castro

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1. M. Enriquez, 'The MIR Analyzes the Coup' in IDOC, Chile: The Allende Years, The Coup, Under the Junta, edited by L. Birns, New York Dec. 1973, 39-41. Enriquez was killed by the military in 1974.

2. C. Altamirano, 'Critical Reflections on the Chilean Revolutionary Process' in Socialist Thought and Practice, Sept. 1974, 85. Altamirano turned up in Havana after the coup.

3. Ibid., 99. See the Libro Blanco, Santiago 1973, 53-65, for the military's version of Plan Zeta. The plan, which the junta used to justify continuing repression of the Left, contained many inconsistencies, not the least of which was the intended death of Allende himself.

achieved power by the revolutionary violence of a few men. In Chile the success of the Left rested on the wide electoral support commanded by Marxist parties, committed by choice or necessity to non-violent means and headed by the non-charismatic parliamentarian Allende. Whereas the Cuban Revolution began without an explicit ideology, with Castro not adopting Marxism-Leninism until 1961, in Chile ideology was an essential political feature. In 1959 Castro emerged in a power vacuum, with all the previous power elites deserted; in 1970 Allende faced the complete array of traditional institutional elites - Congress, judiciary, controller, bureaucracy, armed forces, etc. - which were jealous of their prerogatives and concerned to defend their interests.

While UP's overthrow has led many to argue that a democratic road to socialism is impossible, the strategy of armed revolution has succeeded in Cuba and Nicaragua but failed elsewhere. Furthermore, Allende's failure is contrasted with the debatable assumption that Castro "succeeded" in establishing "the first free territory in Latin America".

The path of revolutionary violence was unrealistic in Chile because of an "objective inequality of the current military forces".[4] Given the continued independence, armed strength and vigilance of the Chilean military, any major build-up of arms by the Left or attempt to break with the existing system would most

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4. J.E. Garcés, 'World Equilibrium, Crisis and Militarization of Chile' in Journal of Peace Research, 2 1974, 83.

likely have only provoked an earlier military intervention. This strategy of insurrection consistently overestimated the armed strength of the Left and the working class, or the influence of the revolutionaries within the Left. While the existence of the revolutionary Left and "popular power" was significant and conspicuous, neither had a mass following.[5] Behind their thinking lay the appeal of the revolutionary foco developed by Ché Guevara.[6]

In opposition to the revolutionary strategy was the second alternative of democratic consensus. This meant a broad political front, requiring in reality an alliance between UP and the Christian Democrat party. Allende demonstrated on several occasions that he was willing to seek agreement with the PDC, and many moderate Christian Democrats also sought a Centre-Left consensus to avoid the process of polarization. Radomiro Tomic described the need for "far-reaching agreement between socialists inspired by Christianity and those inspired by Marxism" if the socialist transformation was to be achieved without dictatorship. He argued that the failure to achieve

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5. In the 1972 CUT elections the MIR received only 2 per cent of the vote, although their influence was wider than this figure indicated.

6. The revolutionary foco derived from the Cuban experience and embodied the idea that the revolution makes itself. Guevara believed that a small guerrilla group could begin the revolution, supplying leadership, mobilizing the surrounding population and acting as catalyst for the spread of revolution outwards from the foco. Popular support for the guerrillas was the crucial element. Guevara himself died in Bolivia trying to realise a revolutionary foco in the centre of the continent.

this "unity of the people" was UP's "fatal political error".[7] PC leader Luis Corvalán also believed that the strength of the PDC in the "middle strata" and their considerable influence in the working class required that UP and the PDC establish channels for agreement.[8]

However, two questions remain unanswered in this strategy. The first is whether such an alliance was feasible. One could overestimate the strength of those Christian Democrats sympathetic to the Left, or the willingness of the middle class, the social base of the PDC, to accept an alliance with the Marxist Left. Beginning in late 1971, militant opposition by middle class groups to Allende strengthened the position in the PDC of Eduardo Frei and other hard-liners relative to that of the moderates.[9]

The second question is whether a UP-PDC alliance would have allowed the socialist transformation to continue. The conflict within the PDC and its political and ideological competition with the Left, including the fact that Frei was the leading candidate for the 1976 presidential election, may well have encouraged the Christian Democrat leaders to demand more than Allende could give without compromising his programme. Concessions by Allende would

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7. R. Tomic, 'One View of Chile's Present Political and Economic Situation' in J.A. Zammit (ed.), The Chilean Road to Socialism, Sussex 1973, 37-40.

8. L. Corvalán, 'The Unarmed Road of the Revolution: How It Worked Out in Chile' in Political Affairs, July 1978, 26. Corvalán was arrested by the military after the coup and sent with many other leftist leaders to Dawson Island. An international campaign secured his release.

9. Frei continued his uncompromising opposition to the Marxist Left after the coup. His work, The Mandate of History and Chile's Future, Ohio 1977, is noteworthy for its lack of self-criticism and unrepentant outlook.

also have alienated the revolutionary Left, certainly the MIR and possibly the radical Socialists, from the democratic process into violence.

The broad front strategy excluded the revolutionary strategy, since a prerequisite demanded by the Christian Democrats and the middle class was that the government control the activities of the revolutionary Left. Allende did display a personal and political ambivalence towards the revolutionaries. But criticism that he failed to control them was not always relevant. The tomas that were outside the institutional process were often taken directly by peasants and workers as defensive responses to owner provocation or from the perception of their and UP's interests. Former Agricultural Minister Jacques Chonchol maintained that, "the impetus for agrarian reform in Chile lay consistently with the campesinos who pushed for the expropriations of the big estates".[10] Thus, the issue of the involvement of the revolutionary Left was of secondary importance. Furthermore, Allende's sporadic attempts to restrain the revolutionaries demoralized the Left more than they demobilized the Right.[11]

The third strategy open to Allende was to seek to increase his electoral support with the aim of securing a congressional majority or, alternatively, of calling a plebiscite to change the constitutional arrangement. Since this was the strategy Allende implemented, we can view it in actual terms and in more direct

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10. D. Tiranti and G. Petersen, 'Allende's Land Revolution' in The New Internationalist, May 1975, 17.

11. L. Whitehead, 'Why Allende Fell' in The World Today, Nov. 1973, 471.

relation to the failure of la via chilena. Unfortunately for Allende, congressional elections did not fall due for two and a half years, by which time an absolute majority was out of the question. The most favourable time to call a plebiscite was, in retrospect, mid-1971, but Allende's proposal for one was rejected by his UP coalition which feared, not without cause, that they would not win.

UP's economic performance was considered crucial to this strategy, and it was subsequently charged that economic mismanagement was the cause of UP's downfall: "Allende was not overthrown because he was a socialist, but because he was incompetent".[12] The Chilean Left underestimated the serious effects of uncontrolled inflation, falling levels of investment and decline in productivity in nationalized sectors. However, even in the midst of a government-created mini-boom, the Left only just managed to obtain 50 per cent of the vote in the 1971 municipal elections.

Both the government and the opposition used the economy as a political weapon. UP explicitly saw economic policy as an instrument in the struggle for power. Opposition groups responded in kind, beginning with the "empty pots", at least half-full and culminating in the October 1972 strike. The perception of economic pressure by the United States was also important. The thesis of economic mismanagement was narrow, not only regarding these political factors, but also in its implication that another left-wing government could succeed if it simply avoided these economic

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12. New York Times, 16 June, 1974.

mistakes.

The socialist transformation was hindered by the failure of UP to develop a coherent direction. The Chilean Left did not have a single mass party, a populist ideology or charismatic leadership necessary to provide that coherence. The existence of two directions in UP meant that Allende had the worst of two possible worlds. The veto of the Socialists proved to be a negative factor, blocking Allende's options without replacing them. The Communists displayed a more disciplined realism and sensitivity to the realities of the Chilean situation, but their caution and the fears of both the non-Communist Left and the Opposition of a Communist predominance in the government weakened their influence. Allende himself, sucked into political and partisan conflict, was increasingly unable to use his presidential authority to address himself directly to the Chilean people. Because of his personal ambivalence and transitional position, he could not provide direction once the different sectors of the Left were concerned to impose their own solutions rather than find a consensus.

An essential element of revolutions seems to be surprise; they occur neither when nor where they are expected. In this sense, their legitimacy or justification is derived ex post facto. The Chilean road to socialism demanded, however, that revolutionary changes be legitimized before they were made; that is, rationale had to precede, not follow, action. This made easier the job of the opposition, whose own flexibility of action was guaranteed by UP's democratic commitment.

The revolutionary rhetoric of some sectors of the Left compounded this difficulty, simultaneously heightening their own

expectations and making it more difficult to fulfill those expectations by giving justification to counter-revolution. The moderate Left was strongly critical of the violent language of the revolutionary Left. Volodia Teitelboim, Communist senator, argued that, "the conspirators continuously took advantage of the ultra-revolutionaries' talk of armed forces, which they did not have".[13] Corvalán believed that, "The real popular power was also weakened and the enemy moves facilitated by the acts of the ultra-leftists, who sought to turn the emergent organizations into a power alternative to the Allende government".[14] As diplomat/writer Jorge Edwards noted, the revolutionary Left

> failed to understand the danger of undermining the foundations of the political system that had enabled it to achieve power, and did not realise on whose behalf it was working when it scorned what it called 'bourgeois legality'.[15]

The events in Chile in 1970-73 bore a resemblance to the Spanish Civil War and the French Revolution, seen in the dilemmas that faced the Left, in the differing personalities and the roles they played, such as the compromiser and the believer, and the way in which individuals saw themselves and their relation to others in a moment of accelerated experience. This raises the interesting concept, beyond the scope of the present discussion, of a cyclical notion of history, with human experience repeating itself.

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13. V. Teitelboim, 'Reflections on the 1,000 Days of Popular Unity Rule' in World Marxist Review, Jan. 1977, 37.

14. Corvalán, 25.

15. J. Edwards, Persona non grata, London 1977, 252.

A review of the possibilities open to the Left in Chile stresses their limitations and concludes that the odds were against the achievement of the socialist transformation. No strategy guaranteed success or failure, and the strategy that Allende chose seemed the most flexible and viable at the time. Its chances of success were diminished by UP's economic errors, its lack of cohesion and direction and revolutionary rhetoric. In the process of polarization, these factors benefitted the opposition forces, which proved more cohesive, militant and purposeful than those supporting the government. With its tenuous control of the government, UP failed because it lost the balance of power. Once the Left lost its momentum and went on the defensive, la via chilena became no longer a revolutionary process but a matter of survival. Ultimately, democracy and socialism were inseparable in Chile: each constituted the strength of the other. An outbreak of violence was probable if either was abandoned - the effect of this threat of violence within the armed forces finally tilted the balance of power in favour of counter-revolution.

Indeed, the fundamental change of direction in recent Chilean history occurred not in 1970 but in 1973. Leaving aside ideological considerations, the characteristics of a revolutionary situation, such as the acceleration of human experience within time, the sudden break with the existing system or moment of transcendance and the ex post facto justification, appeared when the military seized power in September 1973. The Allende government was the catalyst for that change of direction, Allende assuming from Frei the role of Kerensky in Chilean politics. The

failure of Chilean democracy involved many systemic factors that transcended individual governments. Political polarization, mobilization that overflowed the institutional system, a climate of latent and real violence and a continuing sense of economic crisis and political stalemate were all evident before Allende came to power. Ironically, these factors encouraged both his election and, accelerating under the experience of the UP government, his downfall.

Octavio Paz described the militaristic caudillo as "the barbarous reply of Latin America's reality to the unreality of ideologies".[16] In Chile, as in Hispanic countries generally, counter-revolution has proven to be a stronger force than the forces of the Western secular tradition, democracy and socialism.

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16. O. Paz, 'The Centurions of Santiago' in Dissent, Spring 1974, 356.

APPENDIX I

PRESIDENT ALLENDE'S LAST MESSAGE

Compatriots:

This is certainly the last time I shall speak to you. The air force has bombed all our radio stations. My words flow more from disappointment than from bitterness - let them serve as a moral condemnation of those who betrayed their oath, these Chilean soldiers - so-called Commanders in Chief like the self-appointed Admiral Merino, or that jackal Mr. Mendoza, a general who only yesterday protested his loyalty to the government and has now appointed himself Director General of the Carabineros.

Faced with all these events, there is only one thing I can say to the workers: I shall not surrender.

History has given me a choice. I shall sacrifice my life in loyalty to my people, in the knowledge that the seeds that we have planted in the noble consciousness of thousands of Chileans can never be prevented from bearing fruit.

Our enemies are strong; they can enslave the people. But neither criminal acts nor force of arms can hold back this social process. History belongs to us; it is the people that make history.

Workers of my country:

I want to thank you for the loyalty you have always shown, for the trust you have always placed in a man who has been no more than the interpreter of your great desire for justice, a man who undertook publicly to respect the constitution and the law and who did not betray that undertaking. This is the last chance I shall have to speak to you, to explain to you what has happened. Foreign capital and imperialism have allied with the forces of reaction to produce a climate in which the armed forces have broken with tradition. General Schneider and Commander Araya, who upheld and reasserted that tradition, have fallen victim to those people, to that class which now hopes, through its intermediaries - the armed forces - to regain the interests and privileges it had lost.

Let me speak first to the ordinary women of our country, to the peasant woman who had faith in us, to the working woman who worked even harder, to the mother who knew that her children were our concern.

Let me speak to those members of the professions who acted in patriotic fashion, who a few days ago were still resisting the mutiny led by the professional associations, the unions of the upper class, a mutiny which they hoped would allow them to retain the privileges a few of them had enjoyed under a capitalist system.

Let me speak to the young, to those who sang and who added their joy and their enthusiasm to our struggle.

Let me speak to the workers, peasants and intellectuals of Chile who will now suffer persecution, for Fascism has existed in our country for some time, and has already revealed itself in terrorism, in the sabotage of bridges, railway lines and oil pipelines.

No doubt Radio Magellanes will be silenced very soon too, and my words will no longer reach you. Yet you will continue to hear them; I shall always be with you. And at the very least I shall leave behind the memory of an honourable man, who kept faith with the working class.

The people must defend themselves; but they must avoid needless sacrifice. The people must never be crushed, humiliated or destroyed.

Workers of my country:

I have faith in Chile and its destiny. Other Chileans will come forward. In these dark and bitter days, when treachery seeks to impose its own order, you may be sure that soon, very soon, the broad road towards a new society will open again, and the march along that road will continue.

Long live Chile!
Long live the people!
Long live the workers!

These are my last words. I know that my sacrifice is not in vain. May it be a lesson for all those who hate disloyalty, cowardice and treachery.

Source: I. Roxborough, et al., Chile: The State and Revolution, U.S.A. 1977, 229-30.

A NOTE ON SOURCES

The following is a comprehensive, but by no means complete, list of material on Allende's Chile. The primary/secondary division is somewhat arbitrary, because of the contemporaneity of events and the essential passion and commitment of much of the writing. Sigmund's The Overthrow of Allende (1977) is noteworthy as the first detached, objective and thorough account of what happened in Chile.

Neruda's plea in his poem 'Let the Railsplitter Awake' has had its response in the interest of many Americans in Chile's road to socialism and the subsequent questioning of their government's role in Allende's downfall. Consequently, the American involvement in Chile is one of the best documented areas, especially with the two government reports published in 1975.

What is most lacking is a private record - personal papers, letters, confidential reports, etc. - by the principal Chilean actors. Hence most sources deal with the public dimension, as this thesis reflects; the interior human landscape must be inferred by individual writers. The reasons for this paucity of unpublished sources are varied: contemporaneity, the violent death of Allende and others or exile, unwillingness of many to reveal their true activity and, not least, the silence and re-interpretation of Chilean history imposed by the military junta.

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